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# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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From The Fortnightly Review.  
THE THISTLE.

## PRELUDE.

THE green grass-blades aquiver  
With joy at the dawn of day  
(For the most inquisitive ever  
Of the flowers of the field are they)  
Lisp'd it low to their lazy  
Neighbours, that flat on the ground,  
(Dandelion and daisy)  
Lay still in a slumber sound:  
But soon, as a ripple of shadow  
Runs over the whisperous wheat,  
The rumour ran over the meadow  
With its numberless fluttering feet:  
It was told by the watercresses  
To the brooklet, that, in and out  
Of his garrulous green recesses  
For gossip was gadding about:  
And the brooklet, full of the matter,  
Spread it abroad with pride;  
But he stopp'd to babble and chatter  
And turn'd so often aside,  
That his news got there before him  
Ere his journey down was done;  
And young leaves in the vale laugh'd o'er him  
"We know it! THE SNOW IS GONE!"

The snow is gone! but ye only  
Know how good doth that good news sound  
Whose hearts, long buried and lonely,  
Have been waiting, winter-bound,  
For the voice of the wakening angel  
To utter the welcome evangel  
"The snow is gone: rearise  
And blossom as heretofore,  
Hopes, imaginings, memories,  
And joys of the days of yore!"

What are the treetops saying, swaying  
This way all together?  
"Winter is dead, and the south-wind  
Is come, and the sunny weather!"  
The trees! there is no mistaking them,  
For the trees, they never mistake;  
And you may tell by the way of the stem  
What the way is, the wind doth take.  
So, if the treetops nod this way,  
It is the south wind that is come;  
And, if to the other side they sway,  
Go, clothe ye warm, or bide at home!  
The flowers all know what the treetops say:  
They are no more deaf than the trees are  
dumb;  
And they do not wait to hear it twice said  
If the news be good, but forth come they  
With pursed-up lip, and with nodding head,  
By many a whisperous warm green way.

'Tis the white anemone, fashion'd so  
Like to the stars of the winter snow,  
First thinks, "If I come too soon, no doubt  
I shall seem but the snow that hath stay'd too  
long,  
So 'tis I that will be Spring's unguess'd scout!"  
And wide she wanders the woods among.  
Then, from out of the mossiest hiding-places,

Peep sweet moonlight-coloured faces  
Of pale primroses puritan,  
In maiden sisterhoods demure;  
Each virgin floweret faint and wan  
With the bliss of her own sweet breath so pure.

And the borage blue-eyed, with a thrill of  
pride,  
(For warm is her welcome on every side)  
Her close-packed velvet leaves unfolds,  
Creased like the shawl which a lady takes  
From the delicate orient case that holds  
Such tissue treasures. The daisy awakes  
And opens her wondering eyes, yet red  
About the rims with a too-long sleep;  
Whilst bold from his ambush, with helm on  
head  
And lance in rest, doth the bulrush leap.  
The violets meet and disport themselves  
Under the trees by tens and twelves.

The timorous cowslips, one by one,  
Trembling chilly, atiptoe stand  
On little hillocks and knolls alone,  
Peer all over the mellowing land;  
And, as soon as 'tis sure that the snow is  
gone,  
Up they call their comrades all,  
In a multitudinous mirthful band;  
Till the field is so filled with grass and flowers  
That, wherever the flashing footsteps fall  
Of the sweet, fleet, silvery April showers,  
They never can touch the earth, which is  
Covered all over with crocuses,  
And the clustering gleam of the buttercup,  
And blithe grass-blades; that stand straight  
up  
And make themselves small, to leave room for  
all  
The other blossoms that nestle between  
Their sheltering stems in the herbage green;  
Sharp little soldiers, trusty and true,  
Side by side in good order due;  
Arms straight down, and heads forward  
set,  
And saucily-pointed bayonet;  
Up the hillocks, and down again,  
The green grass marches into the plain,  
If only a light wind over the land  
Whisper the welcome word of command.  
Lyrical Fables by R. Lytton.

## RAINDROPS.

WHEN thunderclouds hang black in May,  
Cool drops refresh the weary day  
To man, in childhood's short-lived grief,  
Fast-flowing tears bring sweet relief.

The clouds that come in winter's train  
Drop snow instead of tender rain,  
And duller grief can find no tears,  
To melt the ice of older years.

Dark Blue.

From Blackwood's Magazine.  
A CENTURY OF GREAT POETS, FROM  
1750 DOWNWARDS.

NO. III.—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

No character could possibly be more unlike that of the gentle, timid, sorrowful, and lonely Cowper, than is the austere and dignified form—lonely, too, but after a different kind—which comes next after him, by natural descent and development, in the splendid roll of English poets. And it is not in our power to point out any moment of contact or apparent influence of one upon the other. Wordsworth, so far as we are aware, never even speaks of his predecessor—never acknowledges either admiration of or help from him. Yet it is safe to say, that without Cowper Wordsworth could scarcely have been. The leap from Twickenham to Grasmere direct is too great for human faculties. Cowper had not created a new school or style, but he had acted upon the very air of England as some subtle natural influence of which we know nothing—as the warm ripple of some Gulf-stream, the chill breath of some wandering iceberg, acts upon the atmosphere we breathe. Probably the young poets whose fame began with the new-born century were not even aware that the brightened and more bracing mental air, the higher firmament, the clearer sky, meant Cowper, or meant anything but the ever-mysterious, ever-simple course of nature. Yet it is our conviction that "The Task" had so far affected all the possibilities of composition in England, that already "The Excursion" had become likely, if not inevitable. The laws of natural progress and inheritance had come into operation, independent of any consciousness on the part of the inheritor. Wordsworth was affected as a child is affected by the character of his father, whom he has never seen, nor even had any mental intercourse with, as between soul and soul. He received his gift darkling, warm from the hands which had held it, without knowing, or apparently much caring, whose hands these were.

But these were the hands which had taken up again the old heritage of English poetry—the mantle of Milton, if not his power. Cowper had lifted those singing-

garments, which his generation pronounced to be out of fashion, from the grave of the old poets almost unawares, and with the old fashion had returned to old nature—nature ever young and ever fresh—as the source of his inspiration. He had done it without knowing what he did, timidly, apologetically, never sure that the fresh landscape and sweet natural scenes he loved might not be quite inferior to the moral subjects which he ought to have been treating while his truant soul went off, in spite of himself, to the grateful woods and dewy fields. He was doubtful; but his successor was more than certain—he was dogmatically confident, that nature was not only a lawful teacher, but the supreme and only guide. Cowper made the needful beginning, the thousand deprecating apologies to outraged art and an unprepared public. Wordsworth placed himself on a serene and patient throne, above both art and public, and waited without doubt till they should come to his feet who would never bow to them. Thus, as in almost all intellectual revolutions, the first step was made in uncertainty and doubt; the second, with confidence and daring. Cowper laid the foundations of the structure, and another came and built on it, scarce knowing, not caring, what was beneath. The work of the one rose naturally out of the other, greater than the other, of higher range and infinitely superior power; but yet, as Scripture has it, not to be made perfect without the other, any more than the writers of the full revelation could be perfected without the prophets who had prophesied in darkness, not knowing, but by snatches, what the real importance and significance of their burden was.

It may be said, however, here, that the absence of all consciousness on Wordsworth's part of the work of his immediate predecessor may be much explained by the fact that Wordsworth himself was little moved or influenced at any time by books. He is perhaps a unique example of mental character in this respect. Himself possessed of the highest literary genius, he was indifferent to literature. This, of course, is not to say that he was unmoved by existing poetry; on the con-

trary, he confesses to being "by strong entrancement overcome."

"When I have held a volume in my hand,  
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,  
Shakespeare or Milton, labourers divine!"

But such entrancement does not seem to have been much more than the inevitable homage which is forced from every man who permits himself to come into contact with the great singers of the world. Wordsworth did not seek such contact, nor require it. He was indifferent to books; they were not even his constant companions, much less his masters. His mind was formed and moulded by other influences. He developed alone, like a tree fed by the dews of heaven, and strengthened by its sunshine, unaware of either pedigree or husbandry. He was without father or mother in his own consciousness, like that mysterious priest in the darkness of the patriarchal ages to whom the father of the faithful himself did homage. But no man can stand thus apart, except in his own consciousness. The laws of descent and inheritance are nowhere more stamped than in the line of genius, where every man receives something from the past to be handed on to the future; becoming in himself at once the heir of all the glorious ages and the father of our kings to be.

The early career of Wordsworth is one of curious independence and apparent separation from the ordinary influences that affect mental growth. He seems, like Cowper, to have lost both his parents at a very early age; his mother when he was but eight, and his father when he was in his fourteenth year. He was born in 1770 at Cockermouth, of an old and respectable family, with all the advantages and disadvantages of "good connections,"—abundance of friends to advise and find fault, but none apparently with absolute authority over him, or sufficiently interested in him to afford him a permanent home. In the partial autobiography contained in "The Prelude," his school, and the "grey-haired dame" with whom he lived there, bulk much more largely than any kindred household. Hawkshead, a kind of humble Eton, would indeed seem

to have afforded a most fit training to this son of the mountains. It is—for we presume it still exists, and that no marauding commissioners or school board have yet laid irreverent hands upon the poet's cradle—a foundation of the sixteenth century, planted in a village in the vale of Esthwaite, in the heart of the lake district, surrounded by mountain-peaks, and possessing a little lake of its own. The boys boarded in the cottages about in Spartan simplicity, and such freedom as only the English schoolboy knows. They learned little so far as lessons go, but trained themselves under Nature's stern but kindly rule to bear cold and heat and fatigue, and to do and dare under pressure of all the inducements held out to them by the crags and lakes and wild fells around them. Of this primitive existence Wordsworth gives us a fine and animated picture. He shows himself to us, a boy full of the courage and restlessness of his age, taking his share in all that came. He was one of those who "hung above the raven's nest by knots of grass and half-inch fissures in the slippery rock"—he rode "in uncouth race" with his companions, and held his place among them when summer came, and

"Our fortune was on bright half-holidays  
To sweep along the plain of Windermere  
With rival cars."

The reader will recollect the beautiful description of skating which occurs in the same poem, and in which one seems to feel the sharp cutting of the frosty air—the orange sunset dying away, the blue darkness full of stars, and the lively glimmer of the cottage-windows, "visible for many a mile," which invited, but in vain, the joyous boys to the fireside and supper which awaited them. In all these sports the poet seems to have taken his full share. "We were a noisy crew," he says, with the half-smile, half-sigh, of a man recalling the brightest period of his life. But beside this bright natural picture runs one more delicate and as true. It is, perhaps, too much to take the descriptions in "The Prelude"—a mature man's reflective view of his own childhood, and all the influences which formed it—as an actual picture of

the far less conscious processes which were going on in the mind of the boy. Yet there is a certain ethereal perfume of poetic childhood in the narrative which proves its authenticity. The boy lifts the cottage-latch,

" Ere one smoke-wreath had risen  
From human dwelling, or the vernal thrush  
Was audible; "

and betakes himself to "some jutting eminence" overlooking the half-visible lake, to watch the dawn stealing over the vale. He wanders through the woods at night, and feels himself "a trouble to the peace that dwelt among them." He turns back with trembling oars "when the great shadow of a distant peak" obtrudes itself between him and the stars, feeling "a dim and undetermined sense of unknown modes of being." Thus he moves a twofold creature, attended even in the noisiest of sports by that visionary self, which ponders and dreams. The world breathes mysterious about him—the veil of its marvels keeps ever trembling as if about to rise. The strange confusion of wonder and joy which possesses the brain of a gifted child, the elation which has no cause, the incomprehensible inspiration which tingles through him, the sense of novelty and mystery, of sadness and delight, which broods over everything, sweet, penetrating, and indefinite, has never been so delicately nor so fully painted as in "The Prelude." Such a child goes about the world wrapped in a delicious mist of tender wonderment and gladness, something that is sweeter and more subtle than music murmuring in his ears—the very silence round him rustling as with wings of the unseen—the tiniest flowers claiming kindred, blooming as it were for him alone. Everything is a surprise to him, and yet everything is familiar. He has no words to express the exquisite consciousness of existence, the mysterious and awful, and sometimes oppressive, sense of his own individuality—his union with, yet absolute separation from, the dumb, dim, incomprehensible, beautiful universe which surrounds him. Thus Wordsworth felt, unknowing what it meant, the world a wonder round him, and himself the

greatest wonder of all. This mixture of infinite, vague, visionary sensibility, and the riotous unthinking existence of a schoolboy, is the great charm of "The Prelude"—a poem which probably never will be popular, but which, in many ways, stands alone in literature. The poet's biographer gives, with perhaps a wise judgment, nothing but the facts of his early life—its real history he is allowed to tell himself.

Cambridge does not seem to have had the same genial effect upon him. Here he came under a new kind of influence, and one to which he was much less susceptible. The world of books and of men, of historic traditions and conventional ways, awaited him at the university, and the peculiar constitution of his mind made him impatient of their sway. He was indifferent to books; and he was not very susceptible to personal influence, except when the mind which wielded it was in perfect sympathy with his own. When we add to this, that all his impulses were democratic and republican, that he was little inclined to yield to authority, and all his life long despised and detested everything that he considered conventional, it is not difficult to perceive how it was that his college career was neither delightful to himself nor very satisfactory to his friends. His first vacation carried him back to Hawkshead, a forlorn refuge for the lad who had no natural home to receive him, but yet a kindly and tender one. With exuberant youthful pleasure he returned to the familiar place, to the care of "my old dame, so kind and motherly," and to the boyish friends and occupations he had left; and there is no finer passage in the poem than his description of this return, his mingled pride and shame in his own changed appearance, and the thoughtfulness with which he lay down in the accustomed bed,—

" That lowly bed whence I had heard the wind  
Roar and the rain beat hard; where I so oft  
Had lain awake on summer nights to watch  
The moon in splendour couched among the  
leaves  
Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood,—  
Had watched her with fixed eyes, while to  
and fro,

In the dark summit of the waving tree,  
She rocked with every impulse of the breeze."

Here it probably was, though he does not give any positive information on the subject, that Wordsworth learned as a young man to know the "Matthew" who has been made to live forever in three of his most perfect poems. They were not written till years after, but the mere hint of Matthew's existence in this vale, which is not referred to anywhere except in the poems bearing his name, adds to the interest with which we think of Esthwaite. He, it is clear, must have impressed his character on Wordsworth as no one else ever did; for there is no such sympathetic and tender personal portrait in all the poet's works. The more elaborate pictures of "The Excursion" are as gloomy sketches in sepia, in comparison with the bright yet touching colour and freshness of this wonderful miniature. The man, all human and wayward, stands before us visibly, with the smile on his face and the deep sadness in his heart; — his mirthfulness, his social humour, his unspoken depths of sorrow and wistful loneliness — the profound imaginative poetry of mind that lies below his quips and jests — are all lighted up in one or two suggestive glimpses, which make him to us as a friend we have known. To our own mind, there are none of Wordsworth's short poems which surpass, and few that equal, those entitled "The Fountain" and "The Two April Mornings." Curiously enough — a fact which adds to the touching character of the poems — they were written in the chill depths of a German winter, in the lonely little Saxon university town where the poet passed some months of the years 1798 and 1799. His heart must have been sick for home, and dwelling — oh, how tenderly — upon the dear old vale, with its lake and its white cottages, when Matthew's fun and sadness, his heart at once light and heavy, came so vividly to the young wanderer's poetic mind.

Wordsworth was not, he allows, even a creditable student, and he does not seem to have made a pretence of any anxiety to please his friends, so far as his studies went. He was penniless; and his best hope was to do, what many a virtuous youth has done — to work his way to a fellowship, and from that to a living — delivering thus his relations and himself from the burden of his poverty. But Wordsworth did not do this. Had he not been a great poet in embryo, he would have been indeed a very reprehensible young man, when he set out with twenty

pounds in his pocket, escaping from all cares and discussions, to France, in his last college vacation; but as the result has so long justified his undutifulness, the severest critic can find nothing to say. It was in July 1789, on the eve of the day when the unfortunate Louis XVI., with his winding-sheet already high on his breast, took the oath of fidelity to the new constitution, that Wordsworth and his travelling companion set foot in France. The country was half-mad with joy and self-congratulation. Old things — such old things as oppression and tyranny and injustice, the Bastille, and those terrible seignorial rights which had eaten like a canker into the very heart of the nation — were passing away, and everything was about to become new. Wordsworth threw himself into the joy of the awakened nation with all his heart; it affected him to the very depths of his being, if not in the way of absolute sympathy, at least of interest, as the grandest exhibition of human enlightenment and progress towards the perfect then known. So greatly indeed was he moved by it, that after returning to Cambridge to take his degree and wandering about for seven months in an objectless way, the excitement of the struggle going on across the Channel once more attracted him so, that he rushed back again to France, leaving the prospects and necessities of his life to settle themselves. He alleges that this second journey was in order to learn French but it is very apparent that it was the whirl and rush of the revolutionary stream which had sucked him in.

This forms the one chapter in his life which is like nothing before it nor after — the one strange youthful fever, of intensest importance to himself at the moment, but entirely episodic, and without effect upon his life. It is curious indeed that, drawn into the immediate circle of this great convulsion as he was — made to feel, as it were, the tremor that ran through all the mighty limbs of the nation — he should have been able to drop back again into his homely English groove, so little altered by the contrast. At the same time there are few historical studies more affecting and instructive than the account given in "The Prelude" of this extraordinary chapter in the world's history and in this young man's life. It brings the old well-known picture of the French Revolution, so often painted and in such different colours, before us in yet one new and original way. Wordsworth had thrown himself, with something as near



passion as was possible to him, into that new Gospel of brotherhood and freedom which turned so many young heads and filled so many hearts with hope. Not for himself only, but as the type of his generation, he sets before us the new revolution, which roused it into passionate excitement, hope, and delight. The Golden Age was coming back, to elevate and change this commonplace world. Genius, goodness, merit, the higher qualities of mind and heart, were to be henceforward the titles of rank, the keys of power, the only real distinctions; and, as a natural consequence, oppression, misery, poverty, crime, and every evil thing, were to disappear from the face of a renovated earth.

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very Heaven! Oh times,  
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways  
Of custom, law, and statute took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance!  
When Reason seemed the most to assert her  
rights,  
When most intent on making of herself  
A prime enchantress, to assist the work  
Which then was going forward in her name.

What temper at the prospect did not wake  
To happiness unthought of? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!  
They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams,  
The play-fellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength  
Their ministers.

They, too, whose gentle mood  
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these  
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more  
mild,  
And in the region of their peaceful selves;—  
Now was it that *both* found, the meek and  
lofty  
Did both find helpers to their heart's desire,  
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
wish,—  
Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia—subterranean fields,—  
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
where!  
But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us—the place, where, in the end,  
We find our happiness, or not at all!"

Our space does not allow us to follow in detail the remarkable sketch he gives of his own position and thoughts in the midst of Revolutionary France. His musing attitude, even in the fervour of his sympathy, is very characteristic. He picks up a stone from the dust of the Bastille as a relic, yet confesses that

"I looked for something that I could not find,  
Affecting more emotion than I felt."

He is bewildered by his own tranquillity which he compares to that of a plant "glassed in a greenhouse,"

"That spreads its leaves in unmolested peace,  
While every bush and tree the country  
through  
Is shaking to its roots."

And strangely amid the blaze and carnage of the time comes his record of his long walks and talks with his friend Beaupuis, the patriot soldier who afterwards

"Perished fighting in supreme command,  
Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire."

When the march of events quickens, we find him again in Paris, not so tranquil, but yet musing and pondering as he wanders about looking for traces of the September massacre which had happened just a month before, and gazing upon the scene of that terrible tragedy

"As doth a man  
Upon a volume whose contents he knows  
Are memorable, but from him locked up,  
Being written in a tongue he cannot read."

His heart is troubled; he cannot understand the meaning of this bloody interpolation in the tale of freedom. His imagination yields to the terror that broods in the air. When he reaches the high and lonely chamber under the roof where his lodging is, he watches all night trying to read by intervals, unable to sleep, thinking he hears a voice cry to the whole city "Sleep no more!" And feeling that the place, "all hushed and silent as it was," had become

"Unfit for the repose of night,  
Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam."

Yet notwithstanding this impression of pain and doubt, his conviction of the justice and inevitable success of the cause was unwavering. "From all doubt," he says,

"Or trepidation of the end of things,  
Far was I as the angels are from guilt."

So profound was his faith, that when he returned home and found England excited by discussions about the slave-trade, he dismissed the subject with a certain contempt, feeling that if France and the cause of freedom in her propered, all other questions were settled in this one, and every wrong must be redressed. There is nothing in the poet's life so strange as this plunge of his disciplined and law-lov-

ing nature into the wild dream of the Revolution. The anguish it caused him, as the dream gradually dissipated and hope died away, is but lightly touched; but he tells with sorrowful vehemence of his dismay and despair when he found his own country joining in the alliance against patriot France and the cause of freedom, which had survived the Terror and all its excesses —

"No shock  
Given to my inmost nature had I known  
Down to that very moment."

He cries with sharp pain. He can say no prayer for success to the arms of England, nor thanksgiving for her victories. This is the strange light under which his contemporary eyes regarded the action of England, at a moment upon which we now look back with so much pride. Wordsworth looks on and sees the expedition fitted out, the fleets ready to sail, with tears of indignant passion in his eyes. "Oh, pity and shame!" he cries. To him this intervention, so potential as it turned out to be — so splendidly different, as many people think it, from anything England could or would do now — was an act which tore away

"By violence at one decisive rent  
From the best youth in England their dear  
pride,  
Their joy in England."

Thus strongly does Time change the aspect of affairs, and blind one generation to the hopes and passions of another.

It may be said that this stormy and terrible chapter in Wordsworth's life was but the natural outbreak of revolutionary feeling so common in human experience, an episode which, while full of youth's wildest vagaries, is quite consistent with the equally natural conservatism of maturer years. We think, however, that the effect it produced on the poet's mind and genius gives it a more important character. There is something in the peculiar tone of his philosophy throughout all his after-life which tells of a great shock undergone, and an immense mental effort made, to justify those ways of God to man which are at once the stumbling-block and the strong-hold of all thinking souls. Personal loss would not have driven his disciplined and self-controlled nature into bitter and painful encounter with this great problem as it does to some minds; but the vaster question of a nation's well-being, and the still more poignant misery of beholding what seemed to him the holi-

est and highest of causes lost in excess and crime, was such an argument as might well have moved the calmest. He could not accept it without an effort to account for it, and harmonize this extraordinary undercurrent of discord which seemed to have broken into the majestic chorus of the universe by will of the devil, not by will of God. And accordingly he tells us with lofty sadness how, in the downfall of his hopes he was not without that consolation and "creed of reconciliation" which the old prophets had when they were called by their duty to denounce punishment and vengeance, or to see their threats fulfilled. This is the conclusion he comes to while yet his heart is wrung and all his nerves tingling: —

"Then was the truth received into my heart  
That under transient sorrow earth can bring  
If from the afflictions somehow do not grow,  
Honour which could not else have been; a  
faith  
For Christians, and a sanctity,—  
If new strength be not given, nor old restored,  
The fault is ours, not nature's."

Thus from this great shock and mental tempest came the melancholy yet lofty philosophy which runs through all Wordsworth's works — his constant endeavour to prove, if we may use such words, the reasonableness of sorrow in the theory of human existence — the necessity for it, and the grandeur of its use, which justified its employment. "Honour, which could not else have been." This is putting the argument in a much stronger way than that sickening suggestion that "everything is for the best," with which the commonplace comforters of this world do their little possible to aggravate grief. The reader will find how persistently Wordsworth holds by this thread of belief through all his works. He makes it a principle even that sorrow past becomes lovely, "not sorrow, but delight;" and that there is misery

"That is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds  
Therefrom to humankind, and what we are."

This is his constant theme. He will allow no grief to be dwelt upon for itself — no pang to be suffered without some compensation. "The purposes of wisdom ask no more," is his verdict after the first tears have been shed, and the first sharp pang of pity has gone through the heart. His "Wanderer" turns away "and walks along the road in happiness," when he sees how calmly nature has composed the ruin

and disarray of Margaret's deserted cottage. Anguish and despair, however bitter, must pass away, and good remains, or ought to remain, in their place. This is the imperative doctrine which he preaches, perhaps all the more earnestly because it is difficult for the mind to hold by it through all the miseries of the world. It was the doctrine with which, in the face of the gigantic calamities of France, he had endeavoured to comfort his own sore and bitterly disappointed heart.

After he returned to England — "unwillingly," he says — he lived what he himself calls an "undomestic wanderer's life" for some two years. His friends wished him to enter the Church, which he was now of fit age to do; and he himself, anxious by any means to escape that necessity, made some attempts to gain admittance into the feverish field of journalism. But it is clear, that his desultory and self-governed youth had not qualified him for the regular work and restraint which any profession would have demanded; and both these dangers were speedily staved off by the death of Raisley Calvert, a young friend with whom he had been travelling, whom he attended through his last illness, and who left to him the sum of £900. This was no great fortune, it is true, but to Wordsworth, who had nothing, it meant independence, and almost salvation. "This bequest," he wrote some years later to Sir George Beaumont, "was from a young man with whom, though I call him friend, I had had but little connection; and the act was done entirely from a confidence on his part that I had powers and attainments which might be of use to mankind." This opened at once a new life to the poet, the troublous and uncertain existence of his early years came to an end, and with grateful gladness Wordsworth settled down, as so few people are able to do, to carry out his own theory of life, and shape his career as he pleased. Even at this early period, a pervading consciousness that he was not as other men are, and that it was fit and becoming that extraordinary means should be taken by Providence and his friends to fit him for his mission, is evident in all he says. Thus he celebrates the memory of his young benefactor with a sense that poor Calvert's life has been well expended in this final effort, and that he has acquired by it a title to immortality. "This care was thine," he says,

"That I, if frugal and severe, might stray  
Where'er I liked, and finally array

My temples with the muses' diadem.  
Hence if in freedom I have loved the truth —  
If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,  
In my past verse, or shall be in the lays  
Of highest mood which now I meditate —  
It gladdens me, oh worthy, short-lived youth,  
To think how much of this will be thy praise."

It was at this point, all its early disturbances and convulsions being over, that the poet's life, as we have learned to know it — the serene sober existence, "plain living and high thinking," which he afterwards made into an ideal life among the Westmoreland hills — began. The choice was a strange one to be made by a young man, just twenty-four, who up to this time had shown a love for wandering and adventure, and who had just come through a crisis of intense political excitement. To such a one, the observer would naturally conclude, active life, society, the applause of his fellows, and intercourse with them, would have been the first things sought; but such was not the decision of Wordsworth. His head was full of the highest theories of life and poetry, and he was already his own judge and standard, holding lightly the opinions of others. There is a certain mist of ardour and friendliness in youth which conceals the harsher features of character; but already it is apparent that Wordsworth considered most things primarily as educating influences for himself, and means of perfecting his individual being. For this, in a great degree, the French Revolution had been; and for this — with all tenderness, with all grateful affection acknowledged, but still for this — poor Calvert died. What could men do for the man whom already God had so marked out for special care and training? The world was profoundly interested in everything that could be done to increase his powers and develop them, but the world was incapable of helping much in that great work. Nature, his nurse and instructress of old, and the silence and quiet in which alone great seeds of thought can germinate, and great projects ripen — these were the aids which he needed most.

And here, too, another personage comes into the tale. The brothers of Wordsworth were all by this time afloat on the world; one in business as a solicitor in London, one at sea in that noble East India Company's service, which then opened a career to sailors; and one entering upon that highly successful career of fellowships and prosperities which ended in the mastership of Trinity College, Cam-

bridge. The only other member of the family, Dorothy, the sole sister, had been brought up in the home of an uncle. Her character was a peculiar one. She was impetuous, impulsive and irregular—the kind of creature who flourishes best in the indulgent atmosphere of a natural home. She had been separated from her brother since their childhood, and now at the first moment when their reunion was possible seems to have rushed to him with all the impetuosity of her nature. Without taking his sister into consideration, no just estimate can be formed of Wordsworth. He was, as it were, henceforward the spokesman to the world of two souls. It was not that she visibly or consciously aided and stimulated him, but that she *was* him—a second pair of eyes to see, a second and more delicate intuition to discern, a second heart to enter into all that came before their mutual observation. This union was so close, that in many instances it becomes difficult to discern which is the brother and which the sister. She was part not only of his life, but of his imagination. He saw by her, felt through her; at her touch the strings of the instrument began to thrill, the great melodies awoke. Her journals are Wordsworth in prose, just as his poems are Dorothy in verse. The one soul kindled at the other. The brother and sister met with all the enthusiasm of youthful affection, strengthened and concentrated by their long separation, and the delightful sense that here at last was the possibility of making for themselves a home. He had the income arising from his £900; she had £100, a legacy which some kind soul had left her;—and with this, in their innocent frugality and courage, they faced the world like a new pair of babes in the wood. Their aspirations in one way were infinite, but in another, modest as any cottager's. Daily bread sufficed them, and the pleasure to be derived from nature, who is cheap, and gives herself lavishly without thought or hope of reward. The house in which they settled would seem to have been the first rural cottage which struck their fancy. It was not even in their native district, which had so many attractions to them both, but in the tamer scenery of Dorsetshire, if anything can be called tame which is near the sea. "The place was very retired, with little or no society, and a post only once a week." It was called Racedown Lodge, near Crewkerne. "I think Racedown is the place dearest to my recollections upon the whole surface of the island," Miss

Wordsworth wrote at a later period, with fond enthusiasm. "It was the first home I had." Here the two young poets—for such they were, though one was voiceless—lived and mused, and observed everything that passed around them. They took long walks on the breezy downs, and gazed with brilliant young eyes, which noted every ripple and change of colour over the sea. They gardened, no doubt, full of novel delight in the space of ground which, for the moment, they called their own, and read with industry—"if reading can ever deserve the name of industry," Wordsworth says, with his perennial indifference to books. Their own youthful vigour and freshness of feeling, and unbounded hope, no doubt kept them from any oppressive sense of the monotony of their existence; and so completely sympathetic and congenial were the pair, that their own society seems to have sufficed them for two long years, during which there is no record of their career. In this period Wordsworth wrote his one drama, "The Borderers," a performance scarcely worthy of him, which did not see the light for fifty years, and which even now, we believe, is known to the great majority of his readers only by name. And up to this time we are not aware that he had done anything which could, by any but the most extraordinary insight, be considered as affording promise of the splendid future before him. He had published a volume of "Descriptive Sketches of Lake and Alpine Scenery," not much above the average of university composition, a few years before; but it would have required the eye of a true seer—one possessed with the very gift of divination—to discern the author of "The Excursion" in those smooth and softly-flowing lines.

Such a seer, however, there was, enlightened by the kindred gift of genius, as well as by that ardent youthful enthusiasm which so often makes a right guess, though on perfectly fallacious grounds. The name of this first critic who knew how to appreciate Wordsworth, and foresaw his future glory, was Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Seldom, if ever," he had said some time before, after reading the "Descriptive Sketches," "was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced." We are not told how the two poets were brought to personal knowledge of each other; but in the summer of 1797, Coleridge appeared at Racedown, and their friendship seems to have at once be-

come most warm and close. They plunged into sudden acquaintance, sudden love. There is something very whimsical in Miss Wordsworth's record of the first evening they spent together. "The first thing," she says, "that was read after he came, was William's new poem, the 'Ruined Cottage'" (afterwards embodied in the first book of "The Excursion"), "with which he was much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy 'Osorio.' The next evening William read his tragedy, 'The Borderers.'" This was an appalling commencement; but notwithstanding the temptation to smile over such a portentous way of occupying the placid nothingness of an evening "after tea," there is something in the sublime mutual confidence of the two poets, their intense youthful gravity, and superiority to all that is ridiculous in the situation, and their absorption in the grand pursuit which was opening before them, which turns the reader's smile into sympathy. Great as their fame is now, and much as they have accomplished, no doubt there glimmered before them, in the golden mist of these early days, many an impossible feat and triumph greater than any reality. They exhausted themselves in eager theories, exchanging plans and fancies as they walked with their young heads reaching the skies over the combs and uplands. Half spectator, half inspirer, the deep-eyed rapid girl between them heard and saw, and felt and enhanced every passing thought and scheme; and, with an enthusiasm which borders on extravagance, they all worshipped and applauded each other. "He is a wonderful man," writes Miss Wordsworth of Coleridge. "His conversation teems with soul, mind, and spirit." Coleridge, on his part, describes "Wordsworth and his exquisite sister" with equal fervour. "I speak with heartfelt sincerity, and I think unblinded judgment, when I tell you that I feel a little man by his side," he writes; and adds of Dorothy, "In every motion her innocent soul outbeams so brightly, that who saw her would say guilt was a thing impossible with her. Her information is various, her eye watchful in observation of nature, and her taste a perfect electrometer."

This rapid mutual conquest of each other made by the three friends advanced so quickly, that in a month after the beginning of the acquaintance the Wordsworths removed from Racedown to Somersetshire, to a house called Alfoxden, near Nether-Stowey, in which village Coleridge

lived. This house was much larger than their previous one, and the country delighted them by its beauty; but "one principal inducement was Coleridge's society," says Miss Wordsworth. They remained here for nearly a year, which Wordsworth himself describes as "a very pleasant and productive time of my life." De Quincey gives a curious sketch of the feelings of poor little Mrs. Coleridge (for the poet was already married), who could neither walk nor talk, when the bright apparition of Dorothy Wordsworth, not pretty, like the wedded Sara, but brilliant, hasty, sensitive, and sympathetic, burst upon her—the sharer of all the long rambles, and all the desultory wonderful conversations which were Greek and Hebrew to herself. With these little vexations, however, we have nothing to do; but wonderful were the wanderings by hill and dale, and sweet that summer, "under whose indulgent shade,"—

"Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we roved  
Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan  
combs."

The three made all manner of expeditions about the beautiful country, and all day long strayed, as we have said, with their heads in the clouds, weaving these visionary gossamer-webs of poetry, all jewelled and glorious with the dew of their youth, about every bush and brae:

"Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,  
Didst chant the vision of that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed mariner, and rueful woes  
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel.  
And I, associate with such labours, steeped  
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,  
Murmuring of him who, joyous hap was  
found,

After the perils of his moonlight ride,  
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate  
In misery near the miserable Thorn."

The communion of spirits even went farther than this. The "Ancient Mariner," for instance, was intended to have been a composition by the hands of both poets, and was destined to pay the expense of one of their little excursions. Wordsworth suggested (he himself tells us) the incident of the albatross, and of the navigation of the ship by the dead sailors, and furnished even an actual line or two to the poem; but "our respective manners," he says, "proved so widely different, that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog." This idea, however, of mutual publication, was the origin



of the "Lyrical Ballads" which received so strange a reception from the world. The "Ancient Mariner" grew out of its first slight design into the great and wonderful poem it is; and the little excursion among the Quantock Hills gave rise to the boldest new essay in literature that had been heard of for a hundred years.

The "Lyrical Ballads" were published in September 1798. The volume consisted of Coleridge's great poem, and of many of Wordsworth's, which are as fine as anything he ever wrote. Among them are the exquisite "Anecdote for Fathers"—most clumsy of titles, and most lovely of verses; the "Lines written in Early Spring;" "We are Seven;" and the beautiful "Tintern Abbey." The volume containing all these and many more was published by Mr. Cottle, the friend of Coleridge, in Bristol, who gave Wordsworth thirty pounds for his share in it. The book, however, sold so poorly, having been assailed by almost every critic who noticed it, that when Cottle, a short time after, sold his copyrights to Longman in London, he found this was considered absolutely of no value, and restored it to its authors. This was, as we have already said, the volume which contained Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," a poem which was certainly not open to the charges of puerility and commonplace which were made against his brother poet. It was by Wordsworth, however, that the book was to stand or fall. Unfortunately there was in its very plan a certain polemical tendency and challenge which roused all the existing world of critics against it. The young poet set himself to instruct mankind, not only in the legitimate way, by the real message which he had to deliver, but by revolutionizing the very form and fashion under which poetry had hitherto taught the world. This was a very different matter from Cowper's loyal return to that stately medium of blank verse, which has been so dear to all the greatest of English poets. It was a fanciful theory, brought into being in the numberless discussions which arose between the two young enthusiasts, who combined with the fervour of their personal convictions a certain contempt for the judgment of the world, heightened by confidence in its inevitable docility, and submission one time or another to themselves, its natural leaders. They knew, and were rather pleased to think, that critics would be puzzled and startled; but they did not understand nor believe it possible that they themselves might strain their theory into ex-

travagance, and go further than good taste or good sense sanctioned. According to Coleridge's explanation of this theory, he himself was to take up the supernatural and romantic, as in the "Ancient Mariner," while Wordsworth, whose mind took a different bent, was "to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to the things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural awakening by the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us—an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes and see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand."

This attempt to teach and elevate it by ostentatiously simple means, roused the public into something more than mere disapproval; and we cannot think that in this its decision was so far wrong as, in view of Wordsworth's eventual fame, the reader of to-day would be warranted in supposing. To begin a serious and affecting poem thus—

"A little child, dear brother Jim,"

which, as originally written, was, we are told, the first line (now incomplete) of "We are Seven;" to concentrate the interest in a first volume of poetry upon so long and so extraordinary a production as the "Idiot Boy;" to introduce into serious verse

"A household tub, like one of those

Which women use to wash their clothes;"—

were sins sufficient to weigh down a great many beauties. And when we add that all this was done not accidentally, but with serious intention, and from a height of superiority, as if something sacred and sublime was in the narrative of Johnny's ride and Harry Gill's shivering—something which the common reader was not sufficiently refined or elevated to appreciate—the indignation of the public appears, to a certain extent, justifiable. This foolish and quite unnecessary idea was insisted upon as the very essence and soul of the poet's mission by Wordsworth himself, until maturing years improved his perceptions and taste. Nothing could be more distinctly characteristic of the curious self absorption of his nature. He was a law to himself. The example of all older poetry and the opinion of the world were nothing to him, until time had gradually revealed the fact, which is so often



imperceptible to youth, that all things are not equally important — that in poetry, as in life, there are different magnitudes, and that the fullest truth to nature does not demand a slavish adherence to fact. What he intended to demonstrate was, that the feelings of Betty Foy while her boy was lost were as deep and tragical, and as worthy of revelation to the world, as would have been those of a queen; and there is no doubt that this is perfectly true. The notion that any one denied its truth existed only in Wordsworth's fancy. But the choice of such colloquial familiarity of treatment as suggests a jocular rather than a serious meaning, the absolute insignificance of the incident, and the absence of any attempt to give dignity or grace to the story, balked its effect completely as an exposition of nature; while the humour in it is too feeble, too diffuse, to give it a lively comic interest. Cowper had ventured to be quite as colloquial and realistic in "John Gilpin," with electrical effect; but then the spirit and pure fun of that performance was inimitable, whereas Wordsworth's fun never rose beyond a tame reflective banter. Thus, in his longest poem, he failed, and failed utterly, in the very purpose which he declared to be his chief inspiration; he did not "give the charm of novelty to the things of every day," nor "excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us." This was what he had professed and undertaken to do; and we do not wonder that the world, always more eager to seize upon a visible failure than to hail a modest success, should have received his high pretensions with incredulity, and even with scoffing. Certainly no one could derive much information about, or attain a deeper insight into, human nature by means of Betty Foy and old Susan Gale.

Alongside of this failure, however, appeared certain brief and delicate studies of humanity, which are to Betty Foy as sunshine is to a twinkling taper. The little girl who "lightly draws her breath, and feels her life in every limb" — the fanciful innocent little philosopher, grave in his small fiction, as if it were the solemnest truth, who justifies his preference of one place over another by the first external circumstance which catches his eye, — "At Kilve there was no weathercock!" These, without any ostentation of deeper meaning, with all the grace and sweetness of spontaneous verse, are real and most true

expositions of nature — that simple yet complex nature — separated from us by a distinction more subtle and strange than any which exists between rich and poor — the mind of a child. In these lovely little poems, however, the humbleness of the subject is no way dwelt upon. Instinctively the poet feels that a child is of all ranks and classes alike, and with a most tender hand and careful eye he works his minute and perfect picture. We scarcely need to add, what is nevertheless most true, that in this early volume Wordsworth has painted some states of the mind to us in a few words with a nicety and truth which are exclusively his own, and in lines which, even in expression, are as perfect as anything produced in his maturest days. Who but Wordsworth could have revealed

"That sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind" ?

Who but he would have ventured to defend the sweet indolence of youth — the woodland musings, which he preferred to his books,

"By Esthwaite lake,  
When life was sweet, I knew not why" —

not by any boyish excuse or claim for indulgence, but by the true philosophical suggestion, that

"We can feed these minds of ours  
In a wise passiveness" ?

These sweet snatches of profound yet simple thought were perhaps too brief and too unobtrusive to catch at the first glimpse the public eye, and all were slumped up together in the indiscriminate opprobrium called forth by the inane simplicities of Goody Blake and Betty Foy. What is still more memorable, however, is the fact that the poet himself seems to have been unaware of the difference between them. In the confusion of his youth, amid all the tumult of rising and developing powers, he knew no more than his audience which was the true and which the fictitious; nay, it would almost seem that the inferior work appeared to him more important and better than the best. He tells us with a little simple elation of the "Idiot Boy," — "This long poem was composed in the groves of Alfoxden almost extempore — not a word, I believe, being corrected, though one stanza was omitted. I mention this in gratitude to those happy moments, for, in truth, I never wrote anything with so much glee." This curious boyish simplicity, delighted with the

thought that its production was "almost extempore," and that "not a word was corrected," blunts the edge of the critic's comment, and melts him into indulgence. It is doubly strange and doubly subduing to find so simple a delusion in the mind of one who was so deep a student of his own nature, and had already so high a theory of his mission and work. But there are other traces besides this of Wordsworth's youth. The "dear brother Jim" of "We are Seven,"—an altogether unnecessary and fantastical adjunct—was added, in the spirit of sheer nonsense, at Coleridge's urgent prayer. "We all enjoyed the joke of putting in our friend James Tobin's name," says Wordsworth, with a boyish inability to resist the mischief, though he objects to the rhyme as ridiculous. Thus the two gravest figures in modern literature pause perforce in the dear foolishness of youth, to have their laugh out in spite of art and fitness; and the reader forgives them for the sake of this pleasant bit of revelation, though it was not intended for his eye.

The mixture of success and failure to which we have just referred reappears in almost identically the same manner in the greater work written at this time, and intended to be published in this volume, but which did not see the light for many years—the poem of "Peter Bell." Here once more the poet breaks down in what he means to be the most important part of his work, and makes a brilliant success at a point where it has never occurred to him to seek it. We know no description of the kind which can bear comparison with the first part of "Peter Bell." The sketch of the Potter is one of those extraordinary pictures, which, once produced nothing can obliterate. It is simple fact, true to the individual man's outward appearance, temper, manners, and character, as if it had been a photograph; and at the same time it is absolute truth, embracing a whole race of men, transcending the little limits of the generations, true to-day and to the end of the world. Nor is it the portrait of the Potter alone which is set before us. With a subtle skill the poet brings in himself, with all his fine perceptions, the vision and faculty divine of his own eyes and soul, as painters sometimes bring in a tender and visionary background of blue sky, to throw up and bring into fuller relief the rude figure that occupies the front of the picture. A certain cunning unexpressed wonder, and comparison of this strange being with himself, is, we can see all through, in Wordsworth's

thoughts—a comparison which, all unseen as he feels himself to be, makes him at once smile and sigh. Thus with a half-humorous, half-wistful minuteness, he shows us in glimpses the world so lovely to himself, which surrounds that unawakened soul; the hamlets which lie "deep and low," each "beneath its little patch of sky and little lot of stars;" the "tender grass" "leading its earliest green along the lane;" the unconscious sweetness of the April morn, through which "the soul of happy sound is spread;" the soft blue sky melting through the high branches on the forest's edge. All the rises softly bef us, while Peter, unconcerned and rude, leading his lawless life in the midst, roving among the vales and streams, sleeping beside his asses on the hills, couched on the warm heath, below the sunshine or under the trees, and neither noting nor caring, trudges through the whole with the surly half-contempt of his kind.

"Though Nature could not touch his heart  
By lovely forms, and silent weather,  
And tender sounds, yet you might see  
At once, that Peter Bell and she  
Had often been together.

A savage wildness round him hung  
As of a dweller out of doors;  
In his whole figure and his mien  
A savage character was seen  
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

To all the unshaped half-human thoughts  
Which solitary Nature feeds  
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,  
Had Peter joined whatever vice  
The cruel city breeds.

His face was keen as is the wind  
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence;  
Of courage you saw little there,  
But, in its stead, a medley air  
Of cunning and of impudence.

He had a dark and sidelong walk,  
And long and slouching was his gait;  
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,  
You might perceive, his spirit cold  
Was playing with some inward bait.

His forehead wrinkled was and furred;  
A work, one half of which was done  
By thinking of his 'whens' and 'hows';  
And half, by knitting of his brows  
Beneath the glaring sun.

There was a hardness in his cheek,  
There was a hardness in his eye,  
As if the man had fixed his face,  
In many a solitary place,  
Against the wind and open sky!"

The manner in which this wonderful portrait is made to expound and set forth, not only its own feelingless and rude character, but at the same time the poetic nature behind and around it, is marvellous. It is the most forcible and terse analysis, and yet it is no analysis, but a reproduction of two types of humanity the most distinct and apart from each other. The power and truth of the picture is brought out, not by sympathy, but by the reverse of sympathy—the writer and his subject standing, as it were, at the two opposite poles of existence. Strange is the effect, however, when the reader turns from this amazing beginning to the “tale” so called which follows, and learns how Peter found an ass upon the banks of “the murmuring river Swale”; how the ass,

“ With motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turned round his long left ear; ”

how he lengthened out

“ More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,  
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray; ”

how Peter found the corpse of the poor animal's master in the water, and was guided by the ass home to the poor man's cottage, carrying the news of his death to his widow and children; and how the stillness and solemnity of the night, and this strange adventure, made such an impression upon the Potter, that he

“ Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,  
And after ten months' melancholy  
Became a good and honest man. ”

Here the fall in power and interest from the picture of the man to the record of his doings is very notable. The one is instinct with life and meaning; the other maudering, diffuse, and obscure: the one a model of continuous thought and happy expression; the other strained into ludicrous simplicity and fact-faithfulness, provoking laughter at its most solemn moment, yet not bold enough to rise into true humour. This distinction is very remarkable, and shows at once how true was the poet's instinct and how imperfect his theory. “The tale,” he himself informs us, “was founded upon an anecdote I read in a newspaper of an ass being found hanging his head over a canal in a wretched position. Upon examination a dead body was found in the water, and proved to be the body of its master. In the woods of Alfoxden I used to take great delight in noticing the habits, traits, and physiognomy of asses; and I have no

doubt that I was thus put upon writing the poem of ‘Peter Bell’ out of liking for the creature that is so often dreadfully abused.” Thus it would appear that it was for the story that the poem was written. Wordsworth's intention, no doubt, was to prove that his simple *banal* tale about an ass and a drowned pedlar would instruct the world as much as a greater subject, and reveal to it, as no one had yet revealed, the virtues of asses and their masters. This was his meaning—but Genius balked him, and by the way, without any set purpose or didactic meaning, made this picture of the wild tramp and wanderer, a picture which can never die.

To return, however, to the history. The volume of “Lyrical Ballads” had been just published, when, with a philosophy or indifference which probably was partly affected, the three young originators of it—for it is impossible to deny Dorothy Wordsworth her share in the book, though she never wrote a line—set off for the Continent. The Wordsworths parted from Coleridge at Hamburg, and went on to the little university town of Goslar, not far from Brunswick. We are not told what moved them to choose a place so much out of the way and so little known. Their intention was to learn German, and to make themselves acquainted with German society; but this purpose failed, as neither of them were capable of easy acquaintanceship, and the seclusion in which they had spent the last three years had not, doubtless, improved their social capabilities. A severe, cold, pitiless winter came on, and strangely enough, Wordsworth's mind rushed back to England and its beloved scenes. Few times of his life were more fruitful than the six months of dreary weather during which he froze in a fur-lined pelisse, and cursed the rampant horse of Brunswick which galloped on the dismal black metal of his stove. Perhaps the very sights and sounds of the strange land, whither he had come to forget England, brought it back to him more warmly; or perhaps it is possible, though no one seems able to say, there was in truth as well as in poetry a dead Lucy left behind in one of these peaceful solitudes, whose ending had driven him away to this strange place. There is no information whatever to be found on this subject, either from himself or his friends. The five exquisite little poems which bear that name, snatches as they seem of some sad and tender story, have no explanation whatever attached to

them. They were all written at Goslar; they are full of tender and real feeling, and of the deep reflective pensiveness which comes after sharp sorrow has spent itself; and they all hang together with a unity and reality which makes it very difficult to believe that they meant nothing. Why they should be separated and kept out of their natural arrangement, as they are in all the editions of Wordsworth we have seen, it is very hard to tell. Three of them we find included in the "Poems Founded on the Affections," and two in the "Poems of the Imagination,"—a curiously arbitrary distinction, made, we suppose, by Wordsworth himself, either to veil the personal meaning contained in them, or in obedience to some solemn crotchet, such as entered his mind from time to time; but a future editor would do well to piece together these broken threads, and put the five little lays which embody all we know of Lucy together under her name. They belong as truly to each other as do the poems out of which Tennyson's "Maud" is formed. We should be disposed to place the verses in the following order:—1st, "Strange fits of passion have I known;" 2d, "She dwelt among the untrodden ways;" 3d, "Three years she grew in sun and shower;" 4th, "I travelled among unknown men;" 5th, "A slumber did my spirit seal." Any one who reads them in this succession will see at a glance what a consistent story they convey, and with what an exquisite tenderness and natural feeling it is told. It differs from "Maud," not only in being much shorter and less definite, but also in the strange sad calm given by the fact that the whole is written after Lucy's death—a fact which makes it still less likely that Lucy herself was a mere creature of the poet's imagination; and in every other respect their unity and distinctness is not less than that of Mr. Tennyson's exquisitely-constructed tale.

In Goslar, too, were composed the poems, also belonging to each other by the clearest connection, concerning Matthew, upon which we have already remarked, along with many more of less importance. One of these may be mentioned, solely as showing the curious polemical way in which Wordsworth chooses now and then to treat his own work, labouring to prove how it is done better than other people's and with more advantage to the world. In respect to the little poem called "Lucy Gray," one of the sweetest and best known of his ballads, he says:

"The way in which the incident was treated, and the spiritualizing of the character, might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavoured to throw over common life, with Crabb's matter-of-fact style of handling subjects of the same kind." Strange that the hand which had just framed such an idyll as that of Lucy—such a wonderful sketch of human life and wayward pathetic fancy as that portrayed in "The Fountain" and "The Two April Mornings"—should take the trouble to flourish these pretty verses in the face of the world like the banner of a new sect! But so it was. Wordsworth would seem to have wanted even so much of the critical faculty as would have shown to him how much of his work was for ever, and how much only for a day.

In the spring of 1799, Wordsworth left Goslar. He was now nearly thirty, his published works had met no reception from the public, neither had he as yet done anything which could have justified to sceptical friends his desultory and undecided life. "He had been composing minor poems," says his biographer, "but he now projected something of a higher aim and more comprehensive scope. . . . After much consideration, he chose his own intellectual being as his subject—the growth of his own mind." The poem thus undertaken was that which was published only after Wordsworth's death, under the title of "The Prelude." It was intended, as its name signified, to be the commencement of a series of works, of which "The Excursion" was the only one completed. It was to be the ante-chapel to the Gothic cathedral full and fair, with apse and chapels, with high altar and echoing aisles, which Wordsworth intended to make of his works. Great seemed the possibilities that opened before him, and long and full the life which he still had to labour in, and therefore his objects were equally illimitable. In the autumn of 1799, after some months of residence with friends, he and his sister finally returned to their own mountain country, and established themselves at Grasmere. We quote from the unpublished remnant of "The Recluse," his incomplete work, the following description, printed in Dr. Wordsworth's biography of the poet, of his settlement here among his native hills:—

"On Nature's invitation do I come,  
By reason sanctioned. Can the choice mis-  
lead,  
That made the calmest, fairest spot on earth,

With all its unappropriated good,  
My own? — and not mine only, — for with  
me.

Enshrined — say rather peacefully embow-  
ered —

Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,  
A younger orphan of a home extinct,  
The only daughter of my parents, dwells; —  
Ay, think on that, my heart, and cease to  
stir; —

Pause upon that, and let the breathing frame  
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.

Oh! if such silence be not thanks to god  
For what hath been bestowed, then where,  
where then

Shall gratitude find root? Mine eyes did  
ne'er

Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
Take pleasure in the midst of happy thoughts,  
But either she whom now I have, who now  
Divides with me that loved abode, was there  
Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps turned,

Her voice was like a hidden bird that sang:  
The thought of her was like a flash of light  
Or an unseen companionship — a breath  
Or fragrance independent of the mind,  
In all my goings, in the new and old

Of all my meditations, and in this  
Favourite of all, in this the most of all.  
Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in!

Now in the clear and open day I feel  
Your guardianship; I take it to my heart:  
'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night;  
But I would call thee beautiful: for mild,  
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,  
Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,  
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art  
pleased —

Pleased with thy crags and woody steeps, thy  
lake,

Its one green island and its winding shores.  
The multitude of little rocky hills,  
Thy church and cottages of mountain-stone,  
Clustered like stars, some few, but single  
most,

And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks,  
Like separated stars with clouds behind."

In this quiet abode he lived for eight  
years. Here he was married, and his ma-  
turer life began; and here he published  
another volume of the "Lyrical Ballads,"  
which included the poems written in Ger-  
many, and two of those grave pastorals,  
full of the atmosphere and spirit of the  
mountains, which are so peculiarly his  
own. These tales — "The Brothers" and  
"Michael" — partake of the lofty reflect-  
iveness and saddened yet never gloomy  
gravity of "The Excursion." It is curious  
and even ludicrous to hear him — deeply  
determined always to hold by his theory  
— explaining to Fox, on sending him the  
volume, that these poems "were written  
with a view to show that men who do not

wear fine clothes can feel deeply." Noth-  
ing could be more unnecessary or uncalled  
for than this fictitious explanation, which  
it is very likely, however, Wordsworth  
himself believed, there being, amid all the  
truthfulness of his nature, a certain solemn  
possibility of self-deception, such as be-  
longs more or less to all men possessed of  
a high sense of personal importance and  
devoid of humour. Probably he was him-  
self quite unaware that in these poems he  
was following the bent of his own mind,  
and choosing the kind of subject most nat-  
ural to him.

Just before his marriage Wordsworth's  
little income had been increased by the  
payment of a long outstanding debt, due  
by a former Lord Lonsdale to his father,  
and which, when divided, secured a little  
livelihood to each of the family. The re-  
ceipt of this modest fortune seems to have  
made his marriage practicable, and it was  
followed by a long and steady career of  
prosperity, one good thing after another  
falling into his hands in a way which calls  
forth from De Quincey some half-spiteful,  
half-humorous remarks as to the danger  
of holding anything which Wordsworth  
could by any possibility want. He was, it  
is clear, so far an exception to the sup-  
posed ordinary fate of poets, that he was  
exceptionally lucky — winning, by mere  
dint of sitting still and doing nothing,  
such comfortable prizes in life's lottery as  
many men toil and fret for in vain. To be  
sure, few men have the recommendations  
he had to the favour of those who had such  
gifts to bestow; but circumstances, as it  
happened, completely favoured his own  
view of the poetical character, and of his  
special and individual importance as the  
high priest and expositor of Nature. The  
secluded and contemplative life he loved  
was made possible to him from an early  
age; and throughout all his days the dis-  
turbance cares with which most men have  
to struggle were kept from him. As his  
family increased, his income increased  
with it. If his real work brought him in,  
for a long time, little profit, the public  
work which he was able to accomplish by  
means of a clerk without soiling his sing-  
ing-garments with any of the baser ne-  
cessities of labour, secured for him a plenti-  
ful income. His house was of his own  
choosing, in the spot he loved best in the  
world; and two women, kind and sweet  
and beloved, were his companions and  
worshippers. No happier lot could have  
been. The sorrows which came upon him  
in the later part of his life were such  
afflictions as no man can hope altogether



to escape; but except the loss of his daughter Dora, no sorrow even of the first magnitude ever came his way. He was a happy, prosperous, and successful man, as well as a great and famous poet. If he did not win the popular ear at once, he had the never-failing support of applause from his immediate friends, the opinion of one of whom, at least — Coleridge — he was well warranted in accepting as worth that of half a hundred ordinary critics. And thus his life rolled on, full of peace and high contemplation, full of love and comfort and beauty, and the praise which was most sweet to his ears.

We may say here, and Maga may be forgiven if it is said with a certain complacency, that these were the pages in which anything like true criticism and appreciation of the poetry of Wordsworth first appeared. The *Essays* of Professor Wilson upon the rising light which lesser critics had so pertinaciously endeavoured to extinguish, were the first worthy and public tributes to his glory. We will not attempt to calculate how much the generous warmth of the young critic, himself so full of poetic fire and insight, had to do with the gradual opening of the general mind to a perception of the poet's real greatness; but the splendid critical powers of Christopher North, and his high instinctive sympathy with everything beautiful and noble, were never exercised more lovingly, nor more warmly expressed.

Wordsworth was thus placed in the very best circumstances for perfecting himself and his work. Everything served and bowed to the necessity of providing for his tranquillity in a way which must have increased his natural high sense of his own worth. And that high sense of merit was in itself a support to him which it is difficult to over-estimate. It is not a graceful or love-attracting element in his character. It deprives him of that sweeter grace of humility which endears the poet to us, and gives to poetry that air of natural spontaneous birth after which the grand and sweet unconsciousness of Shakespeare makes the English mind hanker. But Wordsworth was not of the Shakespearian mould, and was in no sense, at no moment of his poetical life, free of self-consciousness. On the contrary, he had nursed himself, trained himself, for the rôle of great poet. He believed in himself profoundly, believing at the same time that it was easier for the whole world to be in the wrong than for Wordsworth to be in the wrong. Such a splen-

did conviction does not come all at once, and neither does it come for nought. Armed in it, as in triple armour, he maintained the steady tenor of his way, accepting honour from no man, calmly working out the great work of his life — himself. He did this as Goethe did it, but more innocently, more kindly than Goethe, — with a sense of law and duty in which his great contemporary was altogether deficient. Goethe secured his training at the cost of a few women's hearts, more or less, which did not matter. Wordsworth bought his more cheaply at nobody's cost, winning it slowly from the slow and noiseless progress of his own thoughts. But still, to Wordsworth as to Goethe, the things that surrounded him were all as instruments working out his advancement, whether it were a nation in revolution, or the clouds upon a northern sky and the ripples on a lake. The most wonderful evidence of this self-regard — which is not conceit, nor vanity, nor any frivolous motive, but a deep and solemn sense that his self was the most momentous thing within his ken, the most sovereign and majestic, with a natural claim upon the aid, not to say allegiance, of all things — is to be found in "The Prelude." To Wordsworth it seemed only right and seemly to devote a long, serious, and, as we have already said, almost solemn poem, to the history of the growth of his mind. If it is well for the student to trace the growth of states and their development, how much more interesting must it be, how much more important for the world, to trace how the poet's mind "orbed into the perfect star," and developed in all its gifts and powers? This he said to himself, gravely, unconscious of any lack of graceful humbleness and that instinctive modesty of nature which is as natural to some great minds as self-consciousness is to others. Wordsworth knew, confessed, and was fully prepared to acknowledge anywhere, that he himself was great — he had known it in his earliest years, from the time when he first began to understand whither his youthful musings tended. He knew it fully during all his life. Shakespeare, we may suppose, may have smiled over his fame — may have lightly laid it aside, and attributed his success to some knack he had; but Wordsworth knew it was no knack, but genius. Wordsworth was always aware of his full claim upon the admiration of men.

This self-consciousness has its advantages as well as its disadvantages. It deprives its possessor of a certain simple



sweetness which is the last glory of the great; it takes away from him the dew and the fragrance of that most gracious humility which is as a perennial youth; but at the same time it supports him through his difficulties, and makes his troubles lighter. And it has, besides, this wonderful practical effect, that no man can believe in himself persistently and consistently without in the end making other people believe in him. Wordsworth seated himself as on a throne, in the seclusion of his mountains. He said to the world, as Constance said in the royalty of her grief: "Here I and poetry sit; this is my throne—let kings come bow to it." And when the hour arrived the kings did come and bowed; and all the world acknowledged that the man who had been the first to divine his own greatness, had justified his own decision, and proved the value of his judgment.

"The Prelude" is full of noble and beautiful passages, and will always be invaluable to the student both of history and of man. We have already quoted from it the powerful historical sketch of the French Revolution—a sketch which we think deserves a high place among the many records of that wonderful event, and gives to the reader of the present generation a new and individual view from an original standing-ground. There is also much of the charm of autobiography in the poem, and it affords an insight which nothing else can do into the poet's life. There is nothing finer in all his works than that picture of the vale of Esthwaite, his school, his "Dame," and all the influences that formed his boyhood and delighted his youth. This is brighter and fresher than anything in "The Excursion," and not less lofty in its truth to nature. But notwithstanding these great recommendations, the poem is founded upon a mistake—a mistake which Wordsworth probably was aware of, since he never in his lifetime gave this record of individual progress to the inspection of the world. The self-belief of the poet here overshot its mark; his sense of his own greatness overtopped the slow conviction of his fellow-men. He had not sufficient sympathy with his race, notwithstanding his old and persistent theory that it was his mission to reveal the secrets of humble life to the world—to perceive that the commonest village tale of love and sorrow would have interested that world more deeply than the history of the mental growth of Apollo himself. He had yet to learn, it would appear, the reverse truth of that

common maxim, that a man's life, truly told, is the most interesting of all topics to his fellow-creatures—a partial truth, which has been productive of much mischief in the world of letters. The other side of the shield bears the other legend: that every individual sooner or later becomes wearisome to his fellows who has not some actual part to play among men, and is not the centre of other lives; and that the more he wraps himself up in his own individuality, the more he falls upon the general taste, and loses the interest which humanity has in all human things. We have no right to apply this criticism to Wordsworth, we repeat, since he himself never proffered this record of himself to the admiration of the world; but it would be well that it should be more fully recognized by all men of genius who are tempted to make themselves their sole subject. For this reason chiefly "The Prelude" is never likely to take that place in the general estimation which in many parts it deserves; but the student who turns to it for help in understanding either the mind of Wordsworth or the state of feeling current among many generous and fine spirits in the end of the last and beginning of the present century, will find that it is a noble and pleasant path by which he has to travel, and will be rewarded in his search for knowledge, by finding many a lovely flower of fairest poesy on the way.

"The Excursion" occupies a different position. Wordsworth has himself informed us, that it was after the composition of "The Prelude" that the idea of this still greater work occurred to him. "The result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem containing views of men, nature, and society, to be called the Recluse." This Recluse was, we presume, the personage introduced in "The Excursion" as the Solitary—a man driven into the despair of bereavement by the death of his wife and children, roused again into feverish excitement by the beginning of the French Revolution, led to wild excesses during its progress, and finally hunted back by the renewed and deeper despair caused by its bloody and terrible failure into a lonely nook among the mountains, where, a misanthrope and sceptic, disbelieving God and doubting man, he consumed the weary days in absolute loneliness. The subject of "The Excursion" is the contrast between this lonely, embittered, and miserable man, and the impersonation of Christian philosophy,

cheerfulness, and wisdom, called the Wanderer, his countryman and contemporary. The famous fact which has called forth so many amusing and witty comments, that this Wanderer is represented to us as occupying no more dignified position in life than that of a pedlar, is in reality quite insignificant, and not worth considering in the poem. It is the last assertion of the old doctrine which Wordsworth proudly gave himself credit for having discovered, and which he clung to with semi-fictitious heat, whenever his genuine inspiration slackened — that a poor man may feel as deeply, and with as much reverence, as a rich man, — a doctrine never really questioned by any mind capable of judging. As one last spasmodic and fantastic assertion of this quite unquestioned principle, it pleases the poet, in that mingling of weakness which accompanies all strength, to make his sage a packman. But it is as puerile on the part of the critic to dwell upon this, as it was on the part of the poet to make it so. The Wanderer wanted no profession, nor rank, nor visible means of subsistence. The laws of natural existence have nothing to do with a being so abstract and typical. He is an impersonation, just as the Solitary is an impersonation. The one is a refined and matured soul, full of gentle wisdom and philosophy, calm as a spectator amid the troubles of the world — a man detached from all personal burdens, and passionless as was the poet who created him. The other is intended to be an embodiment of humanity outraged and disappointed, and unable to learn the lesson of submission — a fiery, impatient, proud, and passionate spirit; such a one as cannot bend his neck under any spiritual yoke, — who demands happiness and delight from earth and heaven, and whose soul chafes and struggles against all the bonds and all the burdens of the flesh. The Wanderer muses tenderly, cheerfully — almost joyfully — about the world, in which he continually sees Good combating with evil: while the Solitary shuts himself up in the recesses of the mountains, and broods with bitter grief and indignation over all the miseries he has known. The story, if story it can be called, tells us how the Wanderer, accompanied by the visionary figure of the Poet himself — "I" the looker-on and chorus of the long dialogue — goes to visit the lakes; how he persuades the other out into the world, as represented by the valley with its cottages and its churchyard below: and how, by dint of much eloquent talk,

and the comments of a fourth interlocutor, the Pastor, upon the different tombs in the graveyard, a certain impression is made upon the mind of the Solitary. No doubt, the poet's purpose was to carry out this beginning in the Recluse, and finally to reconcile his hero to the universe, and bring him back at once to God and man. This, however, he never completed; and the poem which remains to us, is the record of but two summer days among the mountains, filled with snatches of human story, and with what we have ventured to call much eloquent talk — talk at once eloquent and lofty. To quote from a poem so well-known and so full of noble passages seems useless. Here, however, is the scene in which the forlorn and weary hermit, fugitive from the disappointments and vanities of the earth, has sought a refuge, and

"Wastes the sad remainder of his hours,  
Steeped in a self-indulging spleen that wants  
not  
Its own voluptuousness. . . ."

We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,  
A steep ascent; and reached a dreary plain,  
With a tumultuous waste of huge hill-tops  
Before us; savage region! which I paced  
Dispirited: when, all at once, behold!  
Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,  
A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high  
Among the mountains; even as if the spot  
Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs  
So placed, to be shut out from all the world!  
Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;  
With rocks encompassed, save that to the south  
Was one small opening, where a heath-clad  
ridge  
Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close:  
A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,  
A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,  
And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more!  
It seemed the home of poverty and toil,  
Though not of want: the little fields made  
green  
By husbandry of many thrifty years,  
Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.  
— There crows the cock, single in his domain:  
The small birds find in spring no thicker there  
To shroud them; only from the neighbouring  
vales  
The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill-tops,  
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place."

Perhaps the most wonderful thing in "The Excursion," however, is the atmosphere which breathes through every page: the solemn, serious, yet cheerful air of the mountains, at once invigorating and subduing. No passion, no excitement is there. Everything is calm as heaven: an eternity of brooding quiet in which those

giant peaks stand up before God. A great stillness is over all—a stillness as of distance and space, in which it seems natural that the generations should come and go calmly, as the leaves come and go on the trees; migrating from the grey cottage to the green grave with a peaceable serenity, calm as death is, calm as life was. In such scenes the still surroundings of life cease to be secondary, and softly, solemnly glide into the first place. It is man who is foremost in great towns and cities; it is man even who takes the leading place in the wide, rich, patient plains which toil for him like their own cattle, but never usurp his sovereignty. But among the mountains, man in his pettiness is put aside—they live and last, while he but comes and goes. Their presence helps the thinker, as nothing else can do, to hold the balance between peace and strife, and demonstrate how continuous and universal is the one, how episodic and momentary the other. It was Wordsworth more than any other who revealed to the world this quality of the mountains. We, so much lower down in descent, receive it calmly as an established axiom; but it was he who made those dwellers in the land known to man. Among real hills, by real crags, with great Nature breathing softly through all the wonderful stillness, the wandering figures move—the men muse and reason. If it is true that the poet has filled the scene with reflections of his own thoughtful mind and lofty ponderings, till mountain and glen seem but shadows of himself, it is also true that they have become part of his nature, and have given him as much as they have received from him. The patient quiet, and long endurance which is the very sentiment of their being, has entered into his heart. A certain solemn yet sweet conjunction is between the man who expounds them, and the silent grandeur which he reveals. How much it is the mountains, how much it is Wordsworth, we cannot tell, in the dimness of our perceptions; but Wordsworth and his hills united breathe calm over us as we listen, and they are as one in our hearts.

Notwithstanding, we are obliged to confess our conviction that "The Excursion" is very unlikely ever to be widely known, or loved as it deserves out of a very limited circle. It is long and very serious, and broken by few episodes which can relieve the reader's mind from the intense strain of high and continuous thought which fills it. The first book—that which Wordsworth read to Coleridge when they first met, under the title of "The Ruined Cot-

tage"—is, we believe, the one which will longest retain its hold upon the general reader. The humanity in it is stronger and fuller, the picture more definite and clear, than in the brief sketches of the "Churchyard among the Mountains;" and sympathy is more readily awakened for Margaret's long endurance and misery, than for the more artificial wretchedness of the Solitary in his seclusion. Margaret herself, however, though the picture is full of power, is defective in the most characteristic way. She is an impassioned, though deeply serious and dutiful woman, drawn by a painter who knows passion only scientifically as a strange power in the world, but who has no personal conception of its wild force and fervour. With a curious ignorance of the element in which he is working, he spreads the broad canvas—which is too broad, too expansive, for the rapid and vehement and consuming power which he means to portray. Here his very truthfulness of mind, and inability to represent that which he does not know, balks the poetic instinct which makes him divine the existence of a kind of emotion which he has never felt. He knows that passion is wild and hasty and impetuous, but all the powers in his own mind are so slow and gradual that he cannot permit himself to be carried away even by the torrent he has wished to paint. He takes away all the composure and calm of the steadier temperament from his heroine, yet he drags on and prolongs her life and sufferings as if it were a slowly-growing and tranquil sorrow, not a consuming passion of grief and suspense, that absorbed her being. The restlessness of her misery, and her utter abandonment to it, are not those of a spirit that will linger out "nine tedious years;" but he is not aware of this, nor does he see that no such woman, unless she had been carried away by some swift destruction which she could not resist, would have fallen into the wild recklessness of lonely wanderings, leaving behind her "a solitary infant." In short, here is a picture of a soul which has lost the helm of her nature, and abandoned herself to the sway of a misery which she cannot control, drawn by one from whose hand no storm could ever have wrested his helm, and who was unaware what passion meant. The inconsistency is curious, but it is inevitable; and notwithstanding this characteristic defect, the picture goes to the reader's heart.

It is, however, a very serious matter when a poet's fame depends upon a long

and serious philosophical poem. Had Wordsworth written "The Excursion" and "The Prelude" alone, we could have looked for nothing but his final relegation to that honoured and renowned but dusty shelf where "Paradise Lost" holds its place. It is another of the many resemblances which we have not had space to point out between him and Milton, that though the great poems of both are spoken of with bated breath and profound respect, it is to their lesser works — the *débris* of their greatness — the baskets of fragments which posterity has gathered up, and cherishes among its dearest possessions — that they owe their warm and living place in the heart of England. At the same time it proves the greatness both of the elder and the younger poet, that their minor works include in one case the splendour of "Comus," and in the other, such a wonderful outburst of highest poetry as the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality." We have left ourselves no room to comment upon that great and most touching poem; nor on that other which to our own mind embodies, with singular beauty and force, at once Wordsworth's highest strain of melodious composition and his characteristic philosophy — the verses which the poet (always given to uncouth and heavy titles) has called "Resolution and Independence." This sketch of "the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor," with its wonderful representation of the landscape, and equally wonderful sketch of the wayward poetic nature turning in a moment from hope to despondency, is one of the very finest of his briefer works. The description of the bright morning after a night of rain and storm, the stockdove brooding "over his own sweet voice," the birds singing in the woods, the air full of "the pleasant sound of waters," is as perfect as anything in poetry.

"All things that love the sun are out of doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops; on the  
moors  
The hare is running races in her mirth —  
And with her feet she from the plashy earth  
Raises a mist, which, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way wherever she doth  
run

I was a traveller then upon the moor,  
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;  
I heard the woods and distant waters roar,  
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy;  
The pleasant season did my heart employ:  
My old remembrances went from me wholly,  
And all the ways of men, so vain and melan-  
choly.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the  
might

Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight,  
In our dejection do we sink as low;  
To me that morning did it happen so,  
And fears and fancies thick upon me came,  
Dim sadness and blind thoughts I knew not,  
nor could name.

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous boy,  
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride;  
Of him who walked in glory and in joy  
Behind his plough along the mountain-side.  
By our own spirits are we deified:  
We poets in our youth begin in gladness,  
But thereof comes in the end despondency  
and madness."

Never was a picture more perfect or more suggestive.

But time presses, and we can only now ask the reader to recall to his mind — a lighter task — the wonderful brief lines occurring here and there, some of them claiming to be no more than what our grandfathers called "Copies of Verses," which breathe a thousand suggestions into the spirit, and whisper about us like a soft spring breeze, bringing with them all manner of gentle fancies. Let us take as an example the first upon which the book opens — the "Lines written in Early Spring" — already mentioned as one of Wordsworth's earliest compositions. It is the merest trifle — but the man who has scattered such trifles about the world can never lose the human reward of admiring love and praise: —

"I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieves my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure: —  
But the least motion which they made,  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure."

Or let us take this other: —

"He is retired as noontide dew,  
Or fountain in a noonday grove,  
And you must love him, e'er he you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed,  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie,  
Some random truths he can impart,  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart."

These are quite insignificant drops in the great stream of poetry with which Wordsworth has refreshed his country, but how they enter into the reader's heart!—what springs of gentle reflection they wake in us, unknowing! We do not attempt to recall the higher and loftier strains which have helped to mould our own being, but even in these "copies of verses" the chords tremble and thrill under the master's hands, and wake a thousand echoes in the hearers' hearts.

Yet, with all his power and greatness, Wordsworth rarely strikes those deepest notes that move human nature most profoundly. He is a poet of feeling, never of passion. Reflection and contemplation are his natural atmosphere. With a deep, sweet, sober, almost pleasurable sense of his own emotion, he looks at events which sting a more susceptible nature with sharp pangs of anguish. He is never moved out of himself, never feels that the bonds of self-restraint are unbearable, is never dashed against any rock in his solemn and even voyage. His genius is essentially reflective, not dramatic; and this absence of passion and energy exclude him from the ranks of those who have created new existences into the world to enrich it. Wordsworth has added no new inhabitants to the world. His Wanderer and his Solitary are, as we have said, impersonations only—embodiments of abstract character. Peter Bell, though amazingly clear and vivid, is a portrait rather than a creation; and his sketch of Matthew, which is, to our thinking, the most sympathetic and human of all Wordsworth's attempts to portray man, is too brief and slight to be built upon. He did not create. In this, as well as in many other ways, he proves himself to belong to the Miltonic, not the Shakespearian family. But below the level of Shakespeare, the one unapproachable eminence in poetry, we know no English writer by whose side we should hesitate to place the austere and lofty poet of the mountains. In spite of this one great defect, or rather by means of it, he proves his greatness doubly; for without a living soul to help him into that high place—without human progeny to prove that in him too dwelt

the divine life-giving principle of genius—without even the gloomy grandeur of a Lucifer to open the gates of fame for him—Wordsworth has stepped upon a pedestal scarce lower than that of Milton, and so long as the English language lasts, is little likely to lose his crown of fullest fame.

Wordsworth's life was too uneventful, too prosperous and full of comfort, to call for much remark. We might quote from the graphic narrative of De Quincey many pleasant descriptions of his simple home and habits and characteristic surroundings, but there is always a certain strain of personal gossip even in that elegant narrative, and a freedom of contemporary remark which has worn out of use in our more reticent days. He lived with his wife and sister, priestesses, if not of poetry yet of the poet, for many long and peaceful and happy years. Another younger priestess and gentlest ministrant grew at his side in the shape of his daughter Dora, affording him the purest happiness and deepest content of his life. Like every man thus supported by more than one worshipping woman, his belief in himself and his own greatness grew and strengthened. No religious dogma could have been held with a more austere and grave devotion; and as he grew older, the world, impressed equally by the grand spectacle of this man's faith in himself, and by the real splendour of the poetry which began to penetrate into its heart, added its belief to his, and acknowledged the rank which he had always claimed. Pilgrims came from far and near to worship at his shrine, and very courteous, very kind, was the throned and reigning poet. He lived, as we have said, a prosperous life, suffering not at all from the pinching cares which vex so many of his race, able to bring up his children as he wished, and to enjoy all the freedom and many of the solacements which were congenial to his nature. His daughter Dora died in the summer of 1817 leaving a cloud upon his life which never dispersed again. "Our sorrow, I feel, is for life," he wrote six months after. It was the first blow which ever had been struck at its roots; and fortunately that shadowed life, sick with immeasurable loss, was not far from its end.

He died in April 1850, aged four-score, having enjoyed almost everything that life could give, and a good conscience with all. Seldom has poet been so happy; never has man borne happiness and glory with a more steadfast, serious, unexcited sobriety of soul.



## CHAPTER L.

## NUNA'S PROMISE TO ROGER.

WHEN Paul came in at last, and told his wife not to sit up for him, as he was going to the theatre with friends, it seemed to Nuna as if she had heard the words before; as if this cold, estranged manner of her husband's were the reality of her life, and all the brighter, fonder ideas she had fancied or cherished, dreams.

And when next morning came and he sat opposite her at breakfast, hardly speaking a word but absorbed in his paper, she felt it was useless to struggle against fate: complaint and explanation would only alienate him altogether.

Her jealousy seemed dead; what right had she to be jealous? She had married Paul knowing he had loved Patty, and she had been so willing to believe his love for herself, that she had not paused to reflect on the rapidity with which he had transferred his affections. In the long hours of the last sleepless night she had had spare time to realize this thought, and to feel its truth.

"I gave my love too easily; I was won at once; I have made my own life," she said, in a quiet mood that was neither submission nor despair; "and now I have got to live it." She did not do herself the justice of remembering how hard she had pleaded against the hurry of her marriage.

She had so shrunk from approaching the subject of Patty, that she had not told Paul of Miss Coppock's message; and he had gone out now, and would not be home till evening. Nuna hesitated to go and see Roger unknown to her husband.

"But Miss Coppock seems to think he is dying; it is wicked to delay. Suppose he dies alone?"

She shrank a little at the idea of finding herself by Roger's death-bed; but in her cottage visiting, she had met with death, and it did not terrify her so much.

She went; she found the squalid house at last, after about twenty inquiries, and gave a timid knock at the door. Even her unobservant eyes were shocked by the dirty, ruinous aspect of everything: moss had found a home in every crack of the stone steps; and the parlour window looked as if it had received the mud splashes of a twelvemonth.

The door opened slowly, and then she recognized Roger Westropp.

His stern face lightened over with a smile. "Will you please walk in, ma'am?" he said.

Nuna went on into the little room, but she had no eyes for the squalor around her. Roger's face had taken her back to Ashton; for the first time since her marriage she wished herself in her old life again.

She seated herself on the shabby, faded green sofa, but Roger remained standing. Nuna was still to him his young mistress; neither his wealth nor her poverty could work any change in their relative positions.

"It's very kind on you to come, ma'am." Nuna smiled up at him, looking so young and sweet and bright, that Roger felt all his old worship of her revived.

"I'm so glad to see you so much better, Roger; I was afraid I should find you very ill indeed," Miss Coppock said you were."

Roger's face clouded over; he put both hands behind his back and stiffened into hardness.

"She said so, did she? and yet she's never come anear this morning to see if I wur dead, or livin'! I wur mortal ill yesterday, ma'am, but towards evenin' I took a turn, and this mornin' I'm better still. I'm feared I'll disappoint some folks a while longer as'd be glad to feel there was a few feet of earth between they and their secrets."

"Oh! please don't say so, Roger." Nuna spoke in a shocked, distressed voice; almost as if she were crying.

"I'm only sayin' truth, but that there's not what I've got to say to you now, ma'am. If you'd ha' come yesterday, maybe I'd ha' said more, but now——" He fumbled in his waistcoat, pulled out a bit of folded paper, and then slowly opened it and flattened it on the mantelshelf, before he turned to put it in Nuna's hand.

As her eyes followed his movements, they fell on Patty's likeness still resting against the blurred looking-glass. All the colour faded from Nuna's face; her eyes lost their liquid dancing light; one instant, so it seemed to Roger Westropp, had robbed her of her beauty and her youth. But Nuna did not notice his earnest, attentive glance; her eyes remained fixed on the little portrait.

"Have you seen my daughter, Miss Nuna?" he said with a sharp, inquisitive, look.

"No."

"Why not?" he said bluntly; "I hear your good gentleman sees her most days." Nuna changed colour with startling rapidity; she felt his keen gaze on her face, and



she had no strength to hide her agitation.

Roger was noting every change; the drooping head, the quivering lips, the varying colour; and silently he put these side by side with Miss Coppock's talk.

His wits were keen, but they were not inventive, and he stood some minutes before he could see his way to helping Nuna in her trouble.

"It's just as it were at Ashton," he said to himself; "Patty don't care a fig for the fellow herself, but she can't abide to spare him to another woman—the vain hussy!"

And yet, mingling with his pity for Nuna, came a sort of fatherly pride in Patty's beauty.

Nuna opened the paper.

"Messrs. Jones & Co." I don't understand," she faltered.

"You've got to put that writin' by, ma'am, till so be as you hear as I'm taken; then if you goes with it to Chancery Lane, you'll get full informations at the office; but"—he stopped and looked at Nuna to impress her with the importance of his next words—"don't you take no notice to my daughter about that paper, nor to Miss Patience, neither."

"I'm not likely to see either of them," said Nuna, proudly; and she got up to go away.

Roger looked at her, and he smiled in his own peculiar fashion.

"That bit of paper may be of use to you some day, ma'am, for all you don't seem to set no store by it now; I'm a-going now to ask you to do something for me."

"What is it?" Nuna smiled; she was vexed at her own ungraciousness. "I am very glad to do anything for you, Roger."

"Thank you, ma'am; it's to go to Park Lane, No. 7, and ask for Mrs. Downes. See her, if ye please—don't you be put off with no Miss Coppocks,—you see Patty, and tell her to come and see me directly; if she don't come to me, then I goes to her."

Nuna stood trembling.

"I can't," she said; "your daughter would think me an intruder. No, indeed I can't."

"Listen here, ma'am." He touched Nuna's clasped hands with one bony finger. "You was always a good young lady to your father, and others besides; you're not a-goin' to refuse to send Patty to me when I'm sick and wantin' to speak with her? She's my own child, Miss Nuna. She ain't a lovin' child like you,

ma'am, but she'll come if you says them words to her plain and straight—she'll come."

"Can't I write instead?" Nuna urged.

Something in Roger's stern voice and his tall, gaunt height, made her feel like a child with him.

"No, ma'am, writin' won't do. You'll not refuse an old servant, Miss Nuna?" he said earnestly; "it's life and death, I may so say, for me to see Patty. I shan't rest easy till you give me your word as you'll go straight to Park Lane."

While he spoke, a strange, wild plan had darted into Nuna's mind. Why should she not see Patty? She had wished it herself yesterday, and then had shrunk from asking Paul.

"Am I always to be a coward?" she said, and she nerved herself with the struggle only timid natures know, and yet which, once achieved, lifts them to even daring bravery.

"I'll go," she said, abruptly. "Must it be to-day?"

"Yes, to-day, ma'am." His manner had altered; he saw that Nuna could only be compelled into his service by her belief in its importance to himself. "Unless Patty knows to-day, there's no use in telling of her. Thank you, ma'am, I'm obliged to you."

He opened the door while Nuna stood looking at him; she had not yet realized that which she was about to do.

#### CHAPTER LI.

##### A GOSSIP AT THE "BLADEBONE."

THERE is a sensation well-known to persons of a nervous temperament; a something more or less akin to second sight. It is not presentiment; it is rather a consciousness of that which takes place respecting them in the mind of another, and it may exist in a mind entirely free from any leaning to mesmeric influence. When Nuna's thoughts were drawn so strongly to Ashton, she was on the lips and in the hearts of her friends there, and her coming among them was the subject of desire—even of written entreaty.

Mrs. Bright's round, rosy face, which no amount of straw-coloured bonnet trimming or white lace veil could pale, was full of excitement as she walked from the Parsonage gate to the "Bladebone."

If she had not spied out Mrs. Fagg on the doorstep, I incline to think that Will's mother would so far have forgotten the proprieties of life as to communicate her news to Bob the ostler, with whom she had

left her pony-carriage on her first arrival in the village. For with Mrs. Bright "the proprieties" were a lesson still. In her husband's lifetime she had been left free. Will's public-school education had made him more fastidious than his father about outside matters; but the Miss Parsneps were the oracles who really influenced Mrs. Bright—the Miss Parsneps who always knew the right thing, and did it; who seemed never to be compelled to ask with the poet, "And what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?" even about so momentous a point with them as the wearing of flounces by maid-servants.

Mrs. Bright sometimes told herself that the Miss Parsneps must have had "opinions" in their cradles. They were so very settled, while she, poor plump body, was for ever changing in her endeavours to fit on a skin of consistent propriety, which nature had never meant her to wear.

With all her unswerving devotion to the aristocratic spinsters, she was never quite at ease with them. It was a relief to talk to a person who, like Mrs. Fagg, was her acknowledged inferior, and yet sufficiently well-taught to keep her place, even when Mrs. Bright, in the full gush of her confidence, sometimes forgot her own position. The reason of this might lie in the fact that Mrs. Fagg had the rare but ignoble gift of being satisfied with the state of life in which she had been born, and had no desire to tread on the heels of her superiors.

The months that have passed since we last saw these two, have brought little change to the smooth skin and bright cheery eye of the comely widow; but there is more alteration in Mrs. Fagg. It is hard to give this alteration in words; it is scarcely a physical change.

There may be a paler tint on her face; the earnest eyes, set so far under her square, sharp-templed brows, may be a trace more careworn and sunken, but the mouth is less firm; there is a chastened sweetness in the smile that greets Mrs. Bright; an almost liquid light in the blue eyes—that light which we associate instantaneously with motherhood—there is so much of fostering love in it. Looking up at Mrs. Fagg from the bottom of the steps, and remembering your first impression of her, you say to yourself,—if you are a thoughtful person,—

"This innkeeper's wife has passed through some great sorrow since I saw her last, or maybe some great joy."

For though prosperity is apt to harden the heart by turning its love on itself and

its own possessions, yet at its first incoming it unseals a spring of thankfulness which will gush forth on those near it; and, if this spring be kept unchoked by pride and greed, who is to say that prosperity may not be as helpful as adversity? But this is a digression: for it was sorrow in the beginning that had changed Mrs. Fagg.

"How's Dennis to-day?" said Mrs. Bright, raising her flounced muslin as she stepped upwards; and in former times Mrs. Fagg would have soliloquized, "Vain old fool," at sight of the said flounces; but toleration had grown of late with sorrow, with the mistress of the "Bladebone," and, besides, the question was an engrossing one.

"Well, ma'am I'm sorry to say, thank you, not quite so well; there's a thundery feel in the air, and I fancy he's much more sensible to weather-change now than what he used to be, and he's tired besides; he's asleep just now."

"Ah! then of course I won't go and see him." Mrs. Bright gave a sigh of relief.

Dennis had had a sudden illness in the winter, and had been ever since a helpless invalid; his speech was imperfect and it was no easy matter to keep up a conversation with him.

"Anyway you couldn't see Dennis now, ma'am," There was the old acerbity in Mrs. Fagg, and her head jerked back in a minute. "Miss Menella Parsnep's been with him an hour to-day, and in my opinion she's been too much for him, though she have read him to sleep."

"Oh! how can you, Mrs. Fagg? why, I should have thought it such a privilege for dear Miss Menella to take so much notice of Dennis."

Mrs. Bright had rather surprised herself. She knew that she had spoken just as one of the Miss Parsneps themselves would have spoken, but her feelings were somewhat jarred by her own words.

"You see, ma'am,"—Mrs. Fagg spoke in her driest voice,— "you think a deal of them Miss Parsneps, and I think a deal o' Dennis,—that's how it is. Miss Parsneps is well enough in their way; but then, what a very small way it is! If God Almighty didn't shape two elm leaves exact and similar, it ain't likely He meant men and women folk to follow suit, and squeeze themselves to one pattern; each one's way is best for each one's self." Then, with sharp emphasis, "There's that Miss Menella been tryin' to persuade Dennis he'd be better, if he went down to

Priunrose Place and let her nurse him awhile."

"Dear Miss Menella, has she really!" Miss Bright's plump hands pressed themselves together in a gush of enthusiasm. "How good and kind she is! just like a sister of charity, or a nursing mother or an angel."

"Not much of that," Mrs. Fagg smiled, as a vision of the tall, bony figure of Miss Parsnep came with Mrs. Bright's words; "and if she'd only ask Dennis, poor soul! But to sit and tell me I should find it a relief, and I should get through twice as much work without him! I've thought old maids apt at keeping married women to their work; picking holes and interfering about children and such where they can in the manner of doing it: but to tell a wife she'd do anything better without her husband beside her, than with him, and him ill, passes belief, and patience too, for that matter."

Mrs. Fagg ended abruptly as if her tongue had run away with her, and had been brought to a halt suddenly against its will.

"She didn't mean that," — Mrs. Bright always suffered at any break in the harmony of her neighbours; "but you know you've had a great deal of anxious nursing and care since Christmas; and Bobby having scarlet fever, and peeling so dreadfully on the top of everything; and although nobody did take infection, still they might, which to me makes Miss Menella all the kinder."

Mrs. Fagg made no answer. Mrs. Bright's sentences, like some folks' notes, had a way of tying themselves in a double knot, and defied analysis.

She led the way into the little parlour where Paul had looked out of the window and admired the garden of the "Blade-bone." The roses were in full blossom, and the jackdaw, with his head on one side, seemed to have been popping in and out of the espaliers ever since we last saw him.

"I came here to tell you some good news," said Mrs. Bright, when she was comfortably settled on the sofa; "I don't know when I've been so flurried; it took me quite off my head."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Fagg, gravely; "how's Mrs. Beaufort, ma'am?"

"Well, it's not that" — the widow tried to look dolorous — "she's worse than she's been at all. I'm sure it's a sight to see that poor dear Rector, an Oxford man too, going about wringing his hands as one might do oneself," — here she caught her-

self up. "I don't say one would; I'm not sure, now I call it to mind, I ever saw any one walk about wringing their hands before; and certainly it looks conspicuous in a man because of the awkwardness of coat-sleeves; but when one thinks how the Rector reads Latin, and Greek, and Hebrew too, just as easy as you or I read recipes" — she was careful to choose a suitable allusion for Mrs. Fagg's comprehension — "it seems a pity at such a time his learning shouldn't be any use to him."

"I don't fancy Greek and Latin's meant for that," said Mrs. Fagg; "but what is the good news, ma'am?"

"What a tongue she's got!" said the landlady to herself; "it's like that there compass the Rector gave to Bobby before he went to school. How it did shake, shake, shake; wag, wag, wag, before it settled to a point."

"Well" — Mrs. Bright's face broadened into a beaming smile, that seemed to bring her forehead and her chin nearer together, and to send her round, soft bloomy cheeks crushing into the full tulle bordering against which they glowed — "what do you think of Miss Nuna being expected at the Rectory? at least she's been sent for."

"Most time, too; and it's my belief, if she'd been asked in a proper manner, she'd have come long ago. There never was a spice of malice in Miss Nuna; never."

Mrs. Fagg's mouth took its old set look. She was ready to defend her favourite against all assailants.

"I'm very fond of Nuna Beaufort, Mrs. Whitmore, I mean," Mrs. Bright spoke in a clucking voice, as she thought Miss Menella would have spoken. "But I never take a child's part against a parent, especially when he is a clergyman, it's against the course of nature;" then, feeling herself uncomfortable on her stilts, "Yes, she's coming at once, I believe, dear child; and I've no doubt it will have the best effect on Mrs. Beaufort."

"I'm sure I hope it may, ma'am." Sounds outside announced that the pony-carriage was ready, and Mrs. Fagg assisted in tucking away the flounces, and then stood on the door-step till her visitor was out of sight.

"Dennis used to say," — the landlady looked pensive; her husband's sayings were treasured up like golden mottoes now, — "that nothing was made, which there wasn't a use for. Now, I'd like to know the use o' them heaps o' words as Mrs. Bright drops out by the gallon, for

all the world like flakes o' snow; they come out and out, so soft and smooth, no roughness or shape in 'em; nothing as you can call 'em to mind by. She's a right good soul; but she's for all the world like a babe out without its nurse."

## CHAPTER LII.

## PATTY'S ADMIRER.

MRS. DOWNES was in her pretty sitting-room; looking like her picture, as she sat very much in the same attitude in which Paul had painted her, an attitude so easy and natural that it seemed to be a part of herself.

Opposite to her, on so low a seat that he had to raise his eyes to her face, was a young man as picturesque, but not so natural-looking, as Patty herself.

Lord Seton's face had a gipsy type in it; large, dark, southern eyes, made effeminate by the length of the black eyelashes; a skin, dark rather from nature than from exposure to atmosphere; a small characterless nose, and a large listless mouth: these, with an abundance of black, silky hair and beard, seemed more fitted for a costume model, than in keeping with the faultless dress and conventional manner that belonged to them.

His eyes were fixed intently on Patty, but she was not looking at him; she was playing with her rings, twisting Maurice's last gift, a posy of brilliants, round and round one white rounded finger.

She caught herself doing this and smiled.

"I am forgetting all De Mirancourt's lessons on repose, — but what nonsense." Her soft brows narrowed a little — "How absurd I am! just as if by this time I can't trust to my own steering, just as if I don't know quite as much about life, and ever so much more about fashion, than De Mirancourt did, poor old hunch-back!"

The day had been unusually warm; and and although it is very pleasant to be worshipped by a pair of beautiful eyes, still there had been nothing to entertain or divert Mrs. Downes's consciousness from the oppression of the atmosphere. She began to wish Lord Seton would find his tongue; she was the least bit in the world tired of him.

He was supremely happy; his seat was most comfortable; he had a charming subject of contemplation; he wanted

perhaps a cigar; but he could have stayed there content for another hour.

Patty's voice startled him from his dreams.

"You really must go. I have to pay visits, and then to meet Mr. Downes in the Park. You'll make me quite unpunctual."

Lord Seton gave an impatient stretch, and then recollected himself; but Patty had seen the movement, and she pouted.

"What have I done?" he said timidly. "Surely, you don't really care to be thought punctual? Do you know I detest punctual people?" And then he looked at Mrs. Downes to see whether his words had impressed or offended her.

He thought her very charming, the most charming woman he had ever seen; and there was a piquancy, a something different from the women among whom he had been brought up, which amused him extremely; but yet he was afraid of her. Something unlooked for, every now and then, disturbed even his sleepy admiration, and made him feel as if he had lost the usual landmarks by which he guided his conduct to women.

"You will be at the Busheys' to-night," he said; and Patty let him hold her hand while she answered. He thought she liked him to stand looking down into her eyes for his answer, but Patty was only considering how she should have felt two years ago, if she had been told that a Duke's son — a younger son certainly, but still the son of a Duke — would stand holding her hand, and imploring her with beseeching glances to meet him at a ball given by a woman of decided fashion.

"I don't know," she smiled; "I've told you my engagements all depend on my husband: if he likes to go, you may possibly see us there; but I think it unparadoxically selfish in a woman only to study herself in these matters."

"Mr. Downes is very much to be envied;" and then Lord Seton went away.

"Poor young fellow!" said Patty: "If anything happened to Maurice, I know he'd want to marry me at once; but I don't think I'd have him, he is only a lord, and he has no money to speak of. I'm not rich enough even with all Maurice will leave me to keep up a mere title, and enjoy life too."

She sat musing, conscious, as she looked towards the long mirror between the windows, of the charming contrast her white dimpled fingers made against the rosy cheek that nestled in them.

"There's one excellent quality in Mau-

rice, I must say—he's a gentleman; he has none of Patience Coppock's low notions about jealousy and so on. He said to me yesterday that nothing shows him so much how thoroughly fitted I am for society, as the rapid way in which my visiting list has filled up. He has plenty of sense, too; he knows, that, clever as I am, my secluded school life has been a disadvantage, and he's glad of course that I should spend my afternoons with as many visitors as possible; the higher class the better. I look on Lord Seton as a part of my education;" and she gave a merry laugh.

She heard the outer door open, and gave a slight yawn.

"Oh dear! I meant to ring, and say I would not see anyone else, to-day."

But it was not an actual visitor; only a lady who wanted specially to see Mrs. Downes.

"A lady? is she in the drawing-room? You can send Miss Coppock to her."

"Miss Coppock isn't in, ma'am, and the lady said her business was entirely with you—a message from Mr. Westropp, ma'am."

Patty's face rarely told tales; but there was an unusual gravity on it, as she bade the servant show the visitor upstairs.

"I am not at home to anyone else," she said.

Mrs. Downes puzzled for a moment in guessing at her visitor; and then her quickness told her it must be Mrs. Whitmore.

Roger certainly would not have employed a stranger to call on her; besides, he knew no one,—how could he?

There had been an angry smart at first, as if some one had struck her a blow. At times Patty succeeded so completely in forgetting her former identity, that the being reminded of it came with a sense of injury; but this did not last. She was not capable of reading Nuna thoroughly, but her sharp perceptive wits gathered in the upper surface of character, and she knew there was no fear that Mrs. Whitmore would betray her secret, even if Mr. Downes should come in during her visit. Before Nuna was half-way upstairs, Mrs. Downes was smiling at the triumph she anticipated over her former superior.

"We shall see who is the best lady now, Miss Nuna Beaufort."

Nuna's heart throbbed so violently, that she scarcely saw distinctly as she came into the room, and then she was conscious of a pleased surprise.

Patty's greeting was so easy, so grace-

ful, so exactly that which could not have been expected in their strange relative positions, that all memory of the picture and her own sorrow floated away from Nuna, and gave place to a strong feeling of interest in the changed fortunes of Patty Westropp.

The intensity of Nuna's love for Paul made her prone to jealousy of his affection, but there was no trace of envy in her nature. As she looked round the luxurious room, the thought of old Roger and the misery in which he lived oppressed her.

"I have just come from your father." Her low clear voice was tremulous as she gave Roger's message, and Patty noticed it.

"I knew she'd be nervous," she thought; "this shows me how right I was when I said clothes and show make people self-possessed; and that fool of a Patience contradicted me to my face!"

"Yes." Patty's smile was not so beaming as when she had greeted Nuna. "I sent to enquire for him not long ago; he is better, I hope; but, Mrs. Whitmore, he does not care to be spoken of as my father. I changed my name to Latimer when I came into property, and it was then arranged that he and I should live apart."

Nuna felt rebuked; she scarcely knew why; but a feeling of resentment was already beginning against Mrs. Downes.

Patty was polite, smiling, amiable; but her manner, her voice even, suggested that she was years older than Mrs. Whitmore, and had an indulgent pity for her ignorance of the world and its ways.

"Then you don't consider him your father; but I suppose you do as he wishes?"

Patty laughed; but the silvery peal grated on Nuna just then,—she thought it sounded heartless.

"Well, that depends: I suppose now you are married you don't always find yourself able to do as Mr. Beaufort wishes?" She had not spoken at random; she had gathered from Paul all the Ashton news she wanted, but she was startled at the effect of her words.

Nuna's conscience had been stifled when she resolved not to countenance her father's marriage; it had roused sometimes, and then she had tried to quiet it by writing to him in her old loving way, with a studious avoidance of Elizabeth's name; but as time had gone on, and Mr. Beaufort had left off answering her letters, Nuna had felt herself still more aggrieved, and consequently still more in the right,



and conscience had slept. Her heart had been so full of Paul, that home and all relating to it had grown to be far off, unfamiliar. The studio in St. John Street had been her world.

Patty's question stung through all grievances, all fancied wrongs.

Her father was not as old as Roger, but he was no longer young; and she was his only child; and she had left him to the sole care of a woman she knew to be cold and selfish.

"And he was not cold," sighed Nuna. No thought of Patty's presence restrained her; emotion always lifted Nuna beyond any conventional out-works. She clasped both hands over her eyes.

Patty smiled in undisguised amusement.

"How terribly unformed and impulsive she is! and I used to think her so lady-like. I suppose, poor thing, she can't afford to visit, — lives quite shut up, I dare say."

"How is Mr. Whitmore?" she said. But Nuna had recovered herself; she felt that a fresh trouble had started into life, but she thrust it bravely away till she should be alone. Patty's words brought her back to the present, vividly.

"Quite well, thank you." She was able to look calmly into Mrs. Downes's lovely blue eyes.

"I'm so glad." Patty spoke with sympathy in her voice. "Do you know I felt a little anxious about him; he has been painting my portrait lately," — she spoke with a little conscious look, just as if she were in Paul's confidence, — "and I was so sorry to see the change in him; he looked pale and thin, and he was so grave; but I suppose marriage makes men older."

She laughed; she saw a flush on the delicate face; and it vexed her to be obliged to recognize Mrs. Whitmore's beauty. She was surprised to see Nuna smile.

"I must be going. I only came to give your father's message." The spell that Patty had held over Nuna broke with her

last words. In an instant Mrs. Downes was again Patty Westropp, and all the superficial polish failed to hide the real want of refinement from Nuna's intuitive insight. "You will go and see Roger then, won't you?" she said, but there was not a trace of shyness in her voice; "he is expecting you. Good day."

She was gone before Patty had had time to re-assert her sway, — Patty, who, for the first time since her marriage, had an irresistible consciousness of inferiority.

"Pale-faced, gauche creature! she has not a bit of *savoir faire*." The blue eyes flamed up, and then tried to comfort themselves by a long gaze in the looking-glass. The result was the exclamation —

"No wonder Paul Whitmore liked to paint my portrait!" and yet all the while an irrepressible chorus of vexation repeated every refined inflection, every simple movement, all the inborn grace and gentleness of the artist's wife. "Poor weak thing! she don't even know how to use the advantages she has," said Mrs. Downes, contemptuously. "I wonder what De Mirancourt would say to see such eyes so little under control; I don't believe she knows how she shows her feelings in them. I saw what she meant about my father, — so fine from her too. Why, there's not a shadow of excuse for the way she's cut herself off from the Rectory. Her father's quite as much of a gentleman as her husband is — more, for he lives in better style. I don't know what I was about, to let her off so easily, stuck-up, ignorant creature, reproving me in my own house!"

And then as Mrs. Downes calmed her very unwonted vexation, she looked round complacently, and told herself that it must have been a trial to Nuna to see her as she was, and that she must make allowance for her vexation. "She's not worth putting oneself out about," Patty sighed, "but it is horrid to have to go to that dirty house in such hot weather. I really will make him move from Bellamount Terrace."

#### GLADSTONE TO THIERS.

THIERS, our case is much the same;  
They may distrust and doubt us;  
But howsoever they may blame,  
They cannot do without us.

Let, then, your course be one with mine,  
Chief of a Noble Nation;  
Your thorny seat do not resign,  
But keep your situation.

For me, with patience I endure  
All discontent's expression.  
'Tis very true that I'm secure  
Until another Session.

But this assurance you have got,  
Like unto mine, O brother!  
Their business, of your fathom, not,  
Have they, to lead, another.

Punch.

From The Fortnightly Review.  
THE USE OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.

BY EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

SOME years back I wrote in the fly-leaf of my own copy of Mr. Froude's History of England two extracts from two historians, the words of both of whom are commonly weighty. Gibbon tells us in a highly characteristic sentence, "It is not usually in the language of edicts and manifestos that we should search for the real character or the secret motives of princes." Sismondi says, in a sentence no less characteristic, "*L'histoire véritable d'un pays est dans les grands faits qui s'enchaînent les uns aux autres et que tout le monde peut saisir, non dans les correspondances secrètes par lesquelles des intrigants cherchent à se tromper les uns les autres, ou dans les proclamations par lesquelles ils veulent tromper le public.*" We may be sure that neither Gibbon nor Sismondi meant to undervalue the documentary sources of history; but it would seem as if they foresaw that it would some day be needful to raise a protest against the misapplication of those sources. Neither Gibbon nor Sismondi could have doubted that public and official documents of all kinds are among the most important sources of history, that for many purposes they are the most important sources of all. It is indeed true that, when they wrote, public and official documents were by no means so largely available as they are now. But they had quite enough experience of such documents to know what they proved and what they did not prove. They saw that public documents were not always written in good faith; they saw that the motives set forth in a treaty or a proclamation were not in all cases the real motives of its authors. But they must have learned that the mere fact that motives were often set forth which were not the real motives is in itself part of the history. A King cuts off his wife's head one day and marries another wife the next morning. The common sense of mankind can see why he did so. But the Lord Chancellor, in a speech to the Parliament, assures the world that the King did not do it "in any carnal concupiscence," and an Act of Parliament is passed, declaring that it was all done "of the King's most excellent goodness," "for the ardent love and fervent affection which his Highness bore to the conservation of the peace and amity of the realm and of the good and quiet governance thereof." One man probably among all who have read the story has been so loyal

a subject as to accept this explanation as not only actually but necessarily true. To Mr. Froude, and, I presume, to Mr. Froude alone, the fact that certain motives are asserted in an Act of Parliament is enough to prove that those were the real motives. In his own memorable words, "The precipitancy with which Henry acted is to me a proof that he looked on matrimony as an indifferent official act which his duty required at the moment; and if this be thought a novel interpretation of his motives, *I have merely to say that I find it in the statute book.*"

We have here, to my thinking, one of the best examples of the state of mind against which Gibbon and Sismondi warned men beforehand. Into the details of the case I need not enter. Stronger hands than those of Mr. Froude have made the sixteenth century their own. Some day we shall no doubt learn from Mr. Brewer or Mr. Pocock everything about Anne Boleyn and Jane Seymour. I refer to the case as showing, as well as any case can show, what public documents prove and what they do not prove. The Act of Parliament would be the best of all evidence to prove, if there were any doubt about the matter, that Anne really was put to death on certain charges and that Henry presently married Jane instead. Now the main outlines of the history of the sixteenth century are so well known to every one that we find it hard to conceive that there could be any doubt about them, or that they could stand in need of this kind of proof. But, in ages for which our materials are less abundant, it often happens that the historian is glad indeed to light on a public document of any kind to prove events of exactly the same class as the beheading of Anne Boleyn and the marriage of Jane Seymour. A public document is often exactly what he needs to settle some point of time or place or circumstance which the evidence of chronicles leaves uncertain. On points of this kind a public document has no motive to mislead, and it is therefore the highest authority of all. A public document again gives information, such as can often be got from no other source, as to the formal and technical language of the age, the forms of legal procedure, the way in which public business of all kinds was carried on. We must indeed, in all times and places, allow for the tendency of all legal and formal language to be somewhat archaic, for the way in which forms and phrases survive as forms and phrases long after they have ceased to answer to any practi-

cal realities. Still, even in this very point of view, as preserving relics of what was real in past ages, the language of any public document, the forms of any public process, supply in themselves no small stock of teaching. But documents, and especially such a document as that of which we are now speaking, supply also a teaching of a higher kind. No amount of annals or journals or letters could make us understand the real state of things under Henry the Eighth half so clearly as the words of this Act of Parliament. Nothing could bring home to us in so lively a way at once the personal character of Henry and the relation in which he stood to his Parliament and to his people. There has not often been a tyrant who, if he took a fancy to some woman other than his wife, would have thought it needful to go through all the cumbrous processes in which Henry delighted, the divorces, the beheadings, the remarryings, the solemn approving votes of Parliaments and Convocations. But that is because there has not often been a tyrant who, while so little careful about justice, judgment, and truth, was so minutely scrupulous about mint and anise and cumin. If Henry could get the letter of the law on his side, he was satisfied; otherwise his conscience was uneasy. His brother tyrant Francis the First did things in another way. If he fell in love with the Countess of Châteaubriand, he simply took her away from the Count. In this no genius was shown; it was a thing that anybody could do. Henry would have set about the same work in quite another way. He would have found good reasons for cutting off the heads of the Queen and of the Count; he would have found Judges and Juries and Parliaments ready to take their share in cutting them off; and, when they were cut off, he would have married the widow respectably.

“Non nisi legitime vult nubere.”\*

We feel sure that Henry would have shrunk with horror from the thought of poisoning Anne. We believe that, at this stage of his life, he would have shrunk with horror from the thought of seducing Jane. The whole thing might be comfortably settled beforehand, but there must be no outward breach of law, divine or human. When Anne was tried, convicted,

and executed in due form — when Jane was married in due form — when his Lord Chancellor, the keeper of his conscience, had assured him and the world that “carnal concupiscence” had nothing to do with the business — when Parliament had put it on record that all was done of the King’s most excellent goodness — then the conscience of Henry was satisfied, and the beheading of one wife and the marriage of another took their place among the things which cannot be spoken against.

Our Act of Parliament therefore, though it is not in the way in which Mr. Froude looks at it, an infallible guide to Henry’s motives, does nevertheless throw a light on the character of Henry which could hardly have been thrown by any other means. But it does more; it does not merely throw light on Henry’s personal character; it gives us the deepest insight into the character of the time. Nothing could set before us in so strong a light the peculiar features of this time of parliamentary subserviency. The sixteenth century, with a little margin at the two ends, is the only time in our history when such words could have been uttered by the voice of an English Parliament. We cannot conceive anything of the kind in any very much earlier or in any very much later assembly. When we read the words by which King Henry’s conscience was to be set at rest, we feel that we have got out of the region of the Good Parliament on the one hand and of the Long Parliament on the other. We have got into something far worse even than those Parliaments in which a victorious party proscribed their fallen enemies. We have got into a state of things when Parliaments were ready to proscribe anybody or to ordain anything, when Judges were ready to declare anything to be Law, when Juries were ready to find any verdict, when Bishops and Convocations were ready to declare anything to be true and orthodox, at the mere bidding of the capricious despot on the throne. We have reached the state which our forefathers called *unlaw*, not the state when Law was silent, but the state when Law had turned about and become its own opposite, the state when the institutions which were meant to secure right and truth and freedom had been turned into engines of wrong and falsehood and bondage. We are brought face to face, in the words of Arnold, with “that most deadly of all evils, when law, and even religion herself, are false to their divine origin and purpose, and their voice is no longer the voice

\* Let not the classical purist sneer at *nubere* as applied to the husband. During the greater part of the existence of the Latin language such minute subtleties were not attended to.

of God, but of his enemy.\* No mere narrative, no mere record of bills of attainder and acts of Six Articles, could bring all this before us in the same clear and living way as when we hear the Legislature itself, speaking in the name of the whole nation, declare the crimes of Henry to have been done of his most excellent goodness.

But this is not all. When we have reached the fact that the Parliaments of the Tudor age did show a degree of base subservience unknown to the Parliaments of earlier and of later ages, we are naturally led to seek into the causes of the fact. The causes are plainly written in the history of the times. Parliaments had lost the sources of strength which they had had in earlier times, and they had not yet found the sources of strength which they have had in later times. In the very earliest Parliaments the Lords were so strong that they could speak their minds, the Commons were so weak that they could speak theirs. There was no need to pack, to coerce, or to cajole a body whose petitions could be safely refused. It was not till the House of Commons had gained a large amount of strength that Kings found it worth their while either to manage Parliaments or to pack them. By the days of Henry the Eighth the arts of parliamentary management and parliamentary packing had reached a considerable pitch. We may be sure that the first three Edwards never interfered with an election; if anything unfair took place, it was the work of the local Sheriff, not of the Crown itself. But in Henry's reign Government interference at elections was as common as it was under the late state of things in France. A House of Commons in Henry's time consisted largely of the nominees, the servants, the pensioners, of the Crown. The same system went on throughout the century; under Mary and Elizabeth it was further heightened by the practice of enfranchising petty boroughs for the express purpose of being corrupt. Meanwhile the old nobility had been cut off in the Wars of the Roses, and a new nobility, which owed everything which it had to royal favour, was growing up in its stead. There was no longer a Bohun or a Bigod to say, "By God, Sir King, I will neither go nor hang." There was none now who could boast—

"Were I in my castle of Bungay,  
Upon the river of Waveney,  
I would ne fear for the King of Cocknaye."

On the other hand, the process by which Parliaments gradually rose in power during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries had not yet begun. Henry had, what earlier and later Kings had not, a Parliament in which both Houses were pretty much of his own making. Such a Parliament, unlike either earlier or later Parliaments, was ready to register all his edicts, to cut off heads at his pleasure, and to see nothing but excellent goodness in all his doings. We might have inferred something of this kind from a mere narrative of the facts of Henry's reign. But we understand the peculiar state of things far more fully and clearly when we listen to a Tudor Parliament speaking with its own mouth.

When we have got thus far, we may go on to another line of thought. In a certain sense Parliaments and parliamentary institutions were more degraded under the Tudor sovereigns than they ever were before or after. But it was a degradation which carried in it the seeds of improvement. The homage which vice pays to virtue is, after all, not wholly an empty homage. When a tyrant contrives to work his tyranny under the forms of law, he is paying a homage to the form which may some day grow into homage to the substance. When he takes care to get the approval of Parliament for all that he does, he is strengthening the hands of Parliament; he is paving the way for a time when Parliaments will no longer approve all the doings of him or his like. The very care taken to pack and manage the House of Commons throughout this age shows that sovereigns and their ministers fully understood that the House of Commons was a great and growing power in the State. It is not at all unlikely that this peculiar character of Henry's tyranny, his anxiety to do everything in proper parliamentary and judicial form, while it degraded our parliamentary and judicial institutions at the time, really did a good deal to strengthen and preserve them for better days. It should be borne in mind that this was just the age when free institutions came to an end in so many continental countries. The great object of Henry's brother despots was to get rid of their Parliaments. The great object of Henry was to get the sanction of his Parliament for everything that he did. While Charles the Fifth was trampling on the free institutions of Castile, his uncle was paying the deepest outward respect to the free institutions of England. In the end the peculiar turn of mind of

\* History of Rome, II. 139.

Henry worked for the good of English freedom. Our constitutional progress owes much to the fact that he had a temper which at once led him to commit great crimes and made him uneasy unless his crimes received every outward sanction which the forms of law could give them.

Yet another thought may be suggested. When political morality had fallen so low that Parliament could officially call evil good and good evil, does it follow that the general character of the nation was corrupted in at all the same proportion? I do not think that it does. In the sixteenth century men were much more content to be governed than they are now. There was not, and there could not be, the same general and speedy knowledge of public affairs, the same constant discussion of everything which goes on, with which we are familiar. Men were used to a good deal that was arbitrary on the part of their rulers, and they were content to look on state policy as a mystery with which it was presumptuous for common men to meddle. They were used to see noble and even royal blood freely poured out, and the executions of Henry, done in the face of day according to all the forms of law, might even contrast favourably with the deeds of Edward the Fourth and Richard the Third. Henry was at least not stained with the assassinations or secret deaths of brothers, nephews, and rivals. After so many years of war and revolution, men were inclined to put up with a good deal in a King whose title was undoubted, and who at least preserved the public peace at home and sustained the national honour abroad. We must remember that the reign of Henry the Eighth was not wholly taken up with robbing abbeys and beheading Queens. Those were the choice employments of his later and more sober days, after he had finally put aside his "old and detestable life," and had exchanged the vices of a man for the cold and systematic heartlessness of a fiend. Henry, in his earlier days, had really done something to win the regard of his people, and to the last his dealings with foreign affairs were honourable beside those of Charles or Francis. It was not wonderful if Henry really commanded a large share of national respect and confidence. It was not wonderful if men who thought it wisdom to forbear from exercising themselves in great matters which were too high for them, shrank from prying too narrowly into affairs of state, or from applying to their sovereign those strict rules of right and wrong which they most

likely would have at once applied to themselves or to their neighbours.

If then the utter political subserviency which breathes in this remarkable act does not prove the existence of such general moral degeneracy as we might have thought, we have at once suggested to us the importance of looking, in our historical inquiries, both beyond the outward events recorded by chroniclers and beyond the formal acts of Kings and Parliaments. The doings of Henry the Eighth, of his flatterers and of his victims, do not make up the whole history of his age; they do not make up the whole life of the English nation. We see that, fully to understand the age, we must look below the surface and mark the hidden influences which were at work, influences of which the outward events and formal acts of the time were largely the outward expression. We see the kind of relation which there was between the doings of rulers and the thoughts and feelings of the people at large, and how it was that deeds which seem so hateful to us did not in an equal degree shock the public feeling of their own time. We see that there need not have been any special moral abasement in the men who heard of such deeds and did not rise to rid the world of those who did them.

The document then which I have chosen by way of illustration does not prove that particular thing which Mr. Froude, in his guilelessness, seems to have thought that they did prove. But it proves a vast deal in many ways; it brings out into full life many things which would be comparatively dull and unimpressive in a mere narrative, but which fix themselves on the mind in a way never to be forgotten when we listen to contemporaries and actors speaking with their own lips. Mr. Froude himself did not know how to use the statute-book, but there was, if some degree of exaggeration, yet a great deal of truth, in the position with which Mr. Froude set out, that it is in the statute-book that English history must be studied.

We have seen then how documents fare in the hands of a writer like Mr. Froude, a clever man who rushed at the history of one particular time without knowing anything of the times before or after it, a man who had acuteness enough to see the paramount importance of documentary evidence, but who had not enough of critical power or critical experience to teach him how to use his documentary evidence aright. We will now see how documents of the same kind fare in the hands of real historical scholars. Within the last two



years two works of the highest importance for our early documentary history have appeared from the hands of really earnest workers in the historic field. One of them is something more; it is not merely a collection of documents, however skilfully arranged, however critically made use of; it is the most remarkable instance of powerful and brilliant compression which historical literature contains. The one is the volume which Mr. Haddan has given us of the long expected "Councils and Ecclesiastical Document relating to Great Britain and Ireland," a great work which has somewhat hidden its light under a bushel by giving itself out as a new edition of Wilkins. The other is the still more memorable collection of Professor Stubbs, "Select Charters and other Illustrations of English Constitutional History." Here a work of perfectly unique value hides its light still more completely, by veiling a summary of English legal history such as never was seen before under the almost ironical modesty of the words "arranged and edited." Mr. Haddan has done a great work; he has driven away one of the spectres of history. The greatest and hardest of historical struggles, the struggle to prove that Englishmen are Englishmen, has had its difficulty increased tenfold by those dreams about the Early British Church which with some people have made it a kind of point of ecclesiastical conscience to deny their national personality. There is perhaps no delusion which better illustrates the power of words and names, none which better illustrates the way in which men fail practically to understand things which they have in a certain sense learned, than these same dreams about the ancient British Church. People write in their books how the heathen "Saxons" drove the Britons into Wales and Cornwall, and they also write about "our British ancestors" \* and how "the Church of England" was founded by Joseph of Arimathea or Saint Paul. Even the fact that, in the later stages of English conversion, when Rome had once begun the work, we did owe much, not indeed to British but to Scottish missionaries, is forgotten in this passion for connecting our present Christianity with the Christianity of the conquered Welsh. I believe that this kind of thing is meant to prove something for or against the Pope; but the facts of history, alike in the fifth century and in the sixteenth, refuse to bend them-

selves to theological requirements. Mr. Haddan, writing, as far as I can see, without any controversial purpose, has dealt what ought to be a death-blow to this kind of babble about the British Church by the process of putting together all that is really known about the matter. We have here, not only every document, but every scrap of every kind, every mention in any writer, Greek, Latin, English, or native, every inscription, every antiquarian relic of any kind, which can throw any light on the history of the British Church from the beginning till the year 1295. The whole is collected, arranged, and, when needful, commented on, by the unflagging zeal of a true scholar, a man who knows what a thing proves and what it does not. It is really unfair for such a work as this, the result of the profoundest original research and criticism, to be put forth as, in any sense, a new edition of Wilkins, or even as, in the words of the title-page, "edited, after Spelman and Wilkins." Mr. Haddan's work is based upon Wilkins only in the sense in which the work of every later writer must be based on the works of writers who have gone before him. How far Mr. Haddan has really made use of Wilkins, which of course is very largely, is fully set forth in the Preface, and the words in the title-page are certainly a mistake. Modesty is an excellent virtue, but a man should no more do wrong to himself than to anybody else.

Now we have no doubt that there are plenty of people who would look upon such a book as Mr. Haddan's as dull dry work, which any plodding Dryasdust could put together, and which a man of genius would degrade himself by taking the trouble to put together. No doubt it is easier to write a pretty story; no doubt it is easier to read a pretty story; canons and laws and letters, and even the Lamentations of the British Jeremiah, are, I doubt not, less attractive to the general reader than talk about stars and streams and daisies and the great clock of time, which is always on the point of striking, but which never screws up its courage actually to strike. But it is among these things that truth dwells; it is here that we find the materials of history. And it needs no small man to grope into these obscure corners, to discern the wheat from the chaff, the genuine from the spurious, the trivial from the important, to put everything in its right time and place, and to mark the true bearing of each statement on the great run of events. To those to whom history is a matter of amuse-

\* In the Domesday sense of *antecessores* no description could be more minutely accurate.

ment, and truth a thing that may be trifled with at pleasure such labours as those of Mr. Haddan may seem to be those of a mere antiquary and not of an historian. The truth is that the antiquary's work is for the most part badly done, because the only men who are capable of doing it will seldom stoop to do it. What Mr. Haddan's powers may be in the way of historical narrative or of sustained historical discussion he has given us no means of judging. But no man could have brought together in their proper order and relation such a mass of materials as are gathered together in the present volume without possessing faculties of historical research and historical criticism in a very high degree.

The historical value of the materials which Mr. Haddan has brought together is very great. They give us the ecclesiastical side of the English Conquest, a conquest which, of course, as far as Wales was concerned, was still going on up to the time when Mr. Haddan breaks off in 1265. Not one word will be found in this volume to flatter the dream of an Early British Church from which the existing Christianity of England is derived. We see a British Church, and we see an English Church, but they stand to one another in no relation of identity, or even of parentage; the relations between the two Churches are the shadow which inevitably follows the relations between the two nations. The tale is a tale of conquest, of conquest which puts on a milder shape as it goes on, but which is still conquest from beginning to end. There is not a word to show that a single soul among the heathen conquerors was won to the faith by the conquered Christians. Between British and English Christianity there is absolutely no continuity. British Christianity is first displaced by English heathendom, and it is then conquered by the Christianity which England learned direct from Rome. I may say this without in the least undervaluing the large share in the conversion of England which belonged to the independent Scots. For England deliberately preferred the Roman to the Scottish usages, and those parts of England which were converted by Scottish teachers formed parts of one spiritual whole with those whose Christianity came from the earlier mission of Augustine. To the Church thus formed the British Church was gradually brought into submission, in the same way and by the same steps by which the British nation was brought into submission. As the power

of the West-Saxon King advanced, the power of the Kentish Primate advanced also. As British princes learned step by step to acknowledge themselves the men of the English invader, so the Bishops of the primitive Church of Britain learned step by step to acknowledge a spiritual father in the Patriarch of the younger and foreign Church which had sprung up by its side in their own island. Britain, as another world, had its own Emperor and its own Pontiff; but both alike were of the stock of the intruders, and the sons of the soil had to learn to yield both temporal and spiritual obedience in their own land.

To those who have been used to accept the tales about a regularly-ordered British Church in early times, how it had its three Archbishopricks of London, York and Caerleon, and how the archiepiscopal see of Caerleon was removed to Saint David's there must be something startling about the calm and pitiless way in which Mr. Haddan goes through the whole question of early British episcopacy. It may be some comfort when he says that "the system of diocesan episcopacy is conclusively proved to have existed," but he adds that "there is no *reliable* evidence [it is a pity that a scholar like Mr. Haddan should use such a word as 'reliable'] that Archbishoprics ever came into existence there prior to S. Augustin, however probable it may seem that the Bishops of the Roman cities which were the capitals of the several Roman provinces . . . may possibly have risen to some sort of Archiepiscopate over their brethren." This is the sort of way in which shadows vanish as soon as the real critical method is brought to bear on such materials as we have. And, in following out such inquiries as Mr. Haddan's, we must never let ourselves be deluded or swayed in the smallest degree by a feeling which has made endless havoc of truth in these matters. It often happens that the results of historical criticism are purely negative; we pull down without building up anything instead; all that we can do is to show certain statements to be untrustworthy, without providing any trustworthy statements to put in their place. In such cases many people seem to think themselves in a manner wronged; something is taken from them without their receiving any recompense. Many a man who would be quite ready to accept one statement instead of another, feels himself disappointed, if the result of inquiry is simply to show that no statement at all can be safely made. There is something humiliating in being asked tamely to acquiesce in igno-

rance, yet such acquiescence in ignorance is one of the highest lessons which the student of history has to learn. In ages where our materials are plentiful, the result of criticism commonly is to substitute history for legend. In earlier times we have often to be satisfied with upsetting legend without being able to substitute history. The result is a blank, which to minds undisciplined by critical research often seems painful. The domain of knowledge seems to be cruelly lessened, while in truth it is enlarged. The object of Sôkratês is accomplished and the reality of knowledge is substituted for the pretence. In historical matters, as often in practical life, next after knowing a matter, the second best thing is knowing that there is nothing to be known about it.

I say all this, because it can hardly be doubted that to many minds the results of such a book as Mr. Haddan's, which upset cherished delusions by bringing them to the test of authentic documents, will always seem to be purely negative. But in truth Mr. Haddan's researches have brought together a vast amount of positive knowledge; his book shows that, after all, a great deal is to be learned about the early British Church, and he has brought together the true materials for learning it. A book like Mr. Haddan's is not in the strictest sense a history, but it is the necessary groundwork of history. All that is known on the subject is brought together, and it is not only brought together, but brought together in its proper order and relation. If any one wishes to write a narrative history of the British Church, the means are now open for him to do so. And to those who are engaged in the study of any branch of British or English history during the time which Mr. Haddan has taken in hand the book is hardly less indispensable.

The work of Mr. Haddan's fellow labourer Professor Stubbs claims a still higher rank. It shows what can be made of documents, when historic powers of the highest order are brought to bear upon them. We have seldom seen a single volume which was, so thoroughly and almost without a figure of speech, a library in itself. It is hardly too much to say that Mr. Stubbs has here got together all that any one can want to know on his subject, unless he is going to write a book about it, and that, if a man is going to write a book about it, he will find in Mr. Stubbs' volume the best possible guide to his materials. Nor is the book a mere collection of documents, even in that high-

er sense in which Mr. Haddan's book is a collection of documents. Mr. Haddan brings together his materials and adds notes and appendices conceived in the truest critical spirit, which might well form the groundwork of a narrative. Mr. Stubbs does more. He does not merely give us comment, when comment is needed; he rather gives us the narrative with the necessary documents brought in in their proper places. A complete narrative history of England during the time which he takes in hand Mr. Stubbs of course does not give us. So to do is not the object of his work. But he does give us a real narrative from the point of view from which he has undertaken the subject, a narrative of the constitutional progress of England. He begins with the beginning of our national life; he starts from the sound doctrine which so many find a stumbling-block, that "the first traces of our national history must be sought not in Britain but in Germany; in the reports given by Cæsar and Tacitus of the tribes which they knew." And he ends at the only point between Cæsar and our own day at which a line can be drawn, a point which is incidentally the point at which Mr. Haddan's work comes to an end. I believe that I have myself said somewhere or other that, in the reign of Edward the First, English constitutional history ceases to belong to the domain of antiquaries and begins to belong to the domain of lawyers. This is a most important distinction, and it is that on which Mr. Stubbs seems to have acted. The English constitution, springing from the first principles common to our forefathers with all other Teutonic, and perhaps with all other Aryan nations, finally grew into its present form in the days of the great Edward. The changes which have happened since those days have been vast and manifold, but they have been changes in the practical working of our institutions rather than in their actual legal form. A Parliament of our own day is widely different in its practical working from a Parliament of Edward the First, but it is almost wholly in the practical working that the difference is found. The constitution of the two bodies hardly differs at all; the main difference is one which would hardly strike a superficial student of law or history. This difference is that the precarious claim of the clergy to act as an Estate of Parliament has been forgotten rather than legally abolished, while traces of it remain in the anomalous character of our ecclesiastical synods, distinct from Parliament, subordinate to Parlia-

ment, and yet following Parliament as an inseparable shadow. Setting aside this almost forgotten difference, the three elements of King, Lords, and Commons are now, in their nature, in the mode of their appointment, in the strict extent of their legal powers, not very widely different from what they were then. The essential difference lies in the gradual change of their practical relations to one another. The constitutional changes which have been brought in gradually and silently, without any change in the written law, and which still remain matters of tradition and convention, are far more and far greater than those which were brought in by any formal Act of Parliament. And the particular Acts of Parliament which we now prize as special bulwarks of our liberties will be commonly found to be declaratory and confirmatory acts, acts which did not profess to confer any new right, but to provide better means for the exercise of an old one. In the days of Edward the First our chief officers, national and local, have already come into being with functions not widely different from those which they exercise at present. The main principles of law, as understood by modern lawyers, are already established, and from this time the technical lore of their study becomes of the highest importance. From this date the constitutional historian should be, if not a professional lawyer, at least one as familiar with legal maxims and practice as a professional lawyer can be.

In the earlier period all is different. It is perhaps too much to say that Mr. Stubbs derives great advantage from not being a professional lawyer; for we may suppose that a mind so thoroughly historical as his would have triumphed over the temptations of one profession as it certainly has triumphed over the temptations of another. But it is certain that no greater havoc has been wrought among the facts of our early history, and the interpretation of our early laws, than that which has been wrought by professional lawyers. They come to the study of our early history with minds full of the rules and principles of later times, and they instinctively apply them to times in which those rules and principles had not yet come into being. The confusions arising from this source have affected almost every detail of our constitutional history. It is curious to see how, at more than one great crisis of later times, the simpler principles of our forefathers, the application of the law as it stood before lawyers were, would have at

once taken away many difficulties which had been brought in the world by nothing else than by their technical lore. A man of the tenth or eleventh century would have seen nothing irregular, nothing strange, in the great national acts of 1399 and of 1688. To him nothing would have seemed more obvious than, if the King reigned ill, to depose him and to elect another. In electing the new King, it would seem to him the natural course to choose indeed within the royal family, but, within that family, freely to choose the candidate who promised best. To him it would have seemed an utterly needless refinement to bring in legal fictions about the King deserting or abdicating a crown which, in his view, the nation had given and the nation could take away. Still less would he have been troubled with any difficulties about the lawfulness of an assembly not summoned by the King's writ, or of an assembly which continued to sit after the natural or civil death of the King who had summoned it. He would have held that it was never so necessary for the great assembly of the nation to be in full power and activity as when the throne was vacant, and when they had to choose a successor. The doctrine that the throne never could be vacant, that the next heir became King, without election or consecration, as soon as the breath had gone out of the body of his predecessor, would have been met by the man of the tenth or eleventh century with a look of simple bewilderment. Now all these new and strange doctrines are simply the figments of lawyers. They are not changes in the constitution brought in by any regular act of the legislature, they are simply inferences, inferences for the most part most logical and most ingenious, which lawyers have made from the arbitrary principles which they have themselves laid down. Now during the time when these principles were really acknowledged, when they really influenced government and legislation as they have influenced them down to our own day, it is of course necessary thoroughly to understand them and constantly to bear them in mind. But, in dealing with the times before they were invented, it is equally necessary to put them utterly out of sight. And it is just because professional lawyers, and those who have learned their constitutional notions from professional lawyers, find it so hard to put them out of sight that the greater part of the misconceptions of our early history have arisen. To a man like Blackstone, for instance, the arbitrary

rules of the later law had become a sort of nature. He was altogether incapable of understanding the way in which men thought and acted in the days when there was already Law, but when there were as yet no lawyers. Against delusions of this sort there can be no better safeguard than a study of the genuine documents of our early history, especially when they are accompanied and explained by such a narrative commentary as is here given by Mr. Stubbs. In the first part of his book, in the space of fifty-one pages, Mr. Stubbs gives us "a Sketch of the Constitutional History of the English Nation down to the reign of Edward I." of which it is hardly too much to say that there is not in it a word too much or too little. We are hardly so much struck with the range and depth of Mr. Stubbs' learning, and with the soundness of his critical judgment, as we are with the marvellous power and clearness with which he has compressed the contents of many volumes into this small space. Mr. Stubbs too has begun and ended at the right places. It is comforting when the first of living historical scholars begins a Sketch of the Constitutional History of the English Nation with the *Germania* of Tacitus, and after touching on the alleged intermixture of foreign elements with the original English stock, says emphatically —

"Were the evidences of intermixture of race much stronger and more general than they are, to the student of constitutional history they are without significance. From the Briton and the Roman of the fifth century we have received nothing. Our whole internal history testifies unmistakably to our inheritance of Teutonic institutions from the first immigrants. The Teutonic element is the paternal element in our system, natural and political."

The words with which the Sketch ends are no less memorable.

"We have thus brought our sketch of Constitutional History to the point of time at which the nation may be regarded as reaching its full stature. It has not yet learned its strength, nor accustomed itself to economize its power. . . We stop with Edward I. because the machinery is now completed, the people are at full growth. The system is raw and untrained and awkward, but it is complete. The attaining of this point is to be attributed to the defining genius, the political wisdom, and the honesty of Edward I., building on the immemorial foundation of national custom; fitting together all that Henry I. had planned, Henry II. organized, and the heroes of the thirteenth century had inspired with fresh life and energy."

After the Sketch come the documents

themselves, connected, as I have said, by what really amounts to a Constitutional History of the time which Mr. Stubbs has undertaken. And this, be it observed, is precisely the time during which the great work of Hallam does not reach its full value. A number of documents of the highest importance, but which have hitherto had to be sought for in many different works, and several of them works not easy to be got at, are here brought together in their proper order and relation. We have, for instance, the great documents of the reign of Henry the Second — the reign of which Mr. Stubbs is so preeminently the master — the Constitutions of Clarendon, the Assize of Clarendon, the Assize of Northampton, the Assize of the Forest, and the famous *Dialogus de Scaccario*. In the like sort we have the great Charter itself in full, and also the great constitutional documents of the reign of Henry the Third. Earlier and later we have extracts from Cæsar and Tacitus onwards, from the early Laws, from the parts of Domesday which bear on legal matters; we have specimens of the various writs and forms of summons through the whole time which the collection takes in. In fact all the materials for constitutional study are here brought together, and their true bearing is shown in the narrative by which the documents are connected. If any man wishes to make himself master of the political, and very largely also of the social, progress of our nation during the first eight hundred years of our dwelling in this island, he has here the materials for so doing.

In books like those of Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Haddan, but of course still more emphatically in that of Mr. Stubbs, we learn the real value of historical documents and the real method of their study. We see that Mr. Froude was thoroughly right when he said that the history of England was to be studied in the statute-book, but we see also that the statute-book must be looked on as beginning with the Laws of Æthelberht. In that earliest surviving piece of English legislation we see the King, then as now, summoning his people to his councils, and we see the members of the national Council, then as now, guarded by a special protection during the discharge of their public duties. From this point we can trace straight onwards the constitutional history of our nation, the full growth of our earliest freedom, its momentary overthrow at the hand of the stranger, its second birth and second growth in a shape better suited to altered



times. For this purpose there is nothing like the genuine official records themselves. But, while we thus learn what our national records really do prove, we must beware of trying to make use of them to prove what they never can prove. There is not indeed, in the times dealt with by Mr. Haddan and Mr. Stubbs, the same temptation to apply records to strange purposes which there is in the sixteenth century. In early times our Kings were a good deal in the habit of praising themselves, but they do not seem to have received so much incense at the hands of the assembled nation as became usual in the more refined days of the Tudors. Yet, on the same principles on which we are called on to believe in the patriotic self-sacrifice of Henry the Eighth, it would not be hard to make out a very good case for King John. And indeed I remember that an ingenious gentleman of Yorkshire did once write a volume in praise of King John, and there is moreover a parish in Somerset where the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of that much calumniated sovereign is said to be still celebrated by a yearly feast.

I have only to hope that a hint thrown out in Mr. Stubbs' Preface may some day become more than a hint.

"A more consistent supplement or compan-

ion to this volume would be a comparative assortment of corresponding *Origines* of the other Constitutions of Europe. This is a branch of study without which the student cannot fully realize either the peculiar characteristics of his own national polity, or the deep and wide basis which it has in common with those of the modern nations of the Continent."

How deep Mr. Stubbs goes for the basis of our own polity we have already seen; for the common basis of all that European nations have in common he must go deeper still. No one is so well fitted as himself to give us a study of comparative polity, worthy to be set beside the studies which other inquirers have given us, of comparative philology, comparative mythology, and comparative culture. But so to do, the inquiry must not be purely Teutonic; it must be Aryan, perhaps more than Aryan. We must go beyond the Witenagemót of England, the *Marzfeld* of the old Franks, the still abiding *Landesgemeinden* of the free Switzer, to the first glimpse of the *Comitia* of Rome, to the *Ekklesia* of democratic Athens, to the *Agorê* of the old Achaian, and of the *Mysel Gemôt* of Olympos itself, where we see Zeus sitting among his chosen Witan, and calling together the whole assembly — *ealle qa landleode* — of the divine nation to share in the counsels of their King.

THE Russian Geographical Society is organizing a scientific expedition to the Polar Sea. The object of the expedition is not only to reach the North Pole, but also to select such a route as will give the best opportunities for studying the geography, climate, and industrial conditions of the Siberian coasts. The icy sea will be thoroughly explored, especially from a scientific and industrial point of view. The course of the Gulf stream will be carefully followed, and observations made for the purpose of discovering the best route from the mouth of the river Obi for exporting the products of Siberia, and of obtaining a complete knowledge of the fauna and flora of those regions. Special attention will also be paid to the fisheries. A preliminary expedition is to be sent out as soon as possible to reconnoitre the seas in the vicinity of Nova Zembla. It is to obtain information on the following subjects: — 1. The cold and warm streams between the Murman coast and Nova Zembla. 2. The boundary of the ice in summer, and the depth of the sea at various points. 3. The extent of the Gulf stream, and its destination on meeting with the polar ice. 4. The portion of the Gulf stream which skirts the

coast of Nova Zembla. 5. The geographical and climatic conditions of the Karian Sea and the other seas in its vicinity. 6. The boundary of permanent ice on the north-east. 7. The navigation of the mouths of the Siberian rivers. 8. The lighthouses. 9. The fisheries.

Pall Mall.

GREAT geological changes are reported from the districts adjoining the Caspian Sea and the river Ural. During the last ten years the surface of the water in the river has sunk more than a foot, and many bogs on the North Eastern coast of the Caspian have entirely disappeared. The delta of the Ural has diminished from nineteen to five branches, and whereas it formerly occupied one hundred versts, it now occupies only seven. Many islands have become joined to the mainland, and large sandbanks have been formed at the mouth of the river. The town of Guryer, formerly on the sea coast, is now six versts inland.

Nature,

From The Cornhill Magazine.  
FLEUR DE LYS:

A STORY OF THE LATE WAR.

I.

ONE morning last October the town of O——, one of the oldest and most illustrious in France, underwent the humiliation of seeing a foreign army march in triumph through its streets. The event had been foreseen as inevitable more than a month beforehand; but the town was so proud and patriotic, its 'scutcheon was so bright, the roll of its achievements so teemed with great deeds, that honest burghers, who ignored strategy, had been pleased to doubt to the end, half-thinking that some miracle would interpose to save them from such crushing degradation. But O—— was not defensible, as all military men well knew. The fortifications, behind which, four centuries ago, it had stood one of the most memorable sieges in history, had long been demolished; and as no others had been built in their place, nothing could have come of resistance but bombardment and total ruin. To spare the population these needless sufferings, the French garrison had retreated — not, indeed, without fighting, for appearance's sake and against double odds, a battle which was hopeless from the first.

And so the Prussians were tramping, with bayonets fixed and helmets glistening, through the narrow streets of the venerable city. The morning was grey and a little misty; a cold, drizzling rain had been falling during the night; and this, taken in connection with the sombre uniforms and travel-stained appearance of the invading troops, the silent throngs of spectators that bordered either side of the roadway, and the mournful notes of the cathedral bell (which happened to be tolling that morning for a funeral service), gave the solemnity much more the character of a burial procession than of a triumphal entry of conquerors. And yet there they were, conquerors notwithstanding, and with all the pride of conquest stamped on their brows. There was no mistaking the dogged but exulting looks, the heavy, resolute tread, and that peculiar grasp of the rifle-stock which speaks of being on the watch and ready to fight again at a moment's notice; nor did the spectators mistake it. Singularly enough, however, the predominant feeling amongst them was evidently rather one of curiosity than of anger. The day before, the Mayor had, in great trouble of mind, covered the walls of the town with placards, beseech-

ing the inhabitants to be calm, and not to insult their victors; but his fears on this ground proved unfounded. The crowds stared, but did not seem particularly shocked by what they saw. Perhaps during the first five minutes, whilst the vanguard of Uhlans were filing past, and a band that came behind them played the martial strains of the *Wacht am Rhein*, a murmur or two might have been heard, and a few French countenances might have been seen to turn pale; but soon this wore off. As regiment after regiment went by, and the crowd grew familiar with the faces of their foes, sensitiveness became blunted. By the end of an hour's time it had almost vanished; and, curiosity being then cloyed, the crowd lapsed into that state when it needs but a ludicrous incident to break the ice and revive that natural propensity to be jocular which lurks within all great concourses of men; and it so chanced that the needed incident occurred. At a spot where four roads met was a plug-hole, which, having been somehow widened, formed an insidious and dangerous foot-trap. Most of the soldiers, with Teutonic prudence, avoided it; but one less wary set his foot in it, without looking, and before he could extricate himself was bumped by the man behind him, and this second man by a third; so that they all three tripped up and fell with a crash, letting go their rifles, and plunging their entire company into confusion; upon which a delighted titter broke out along the whole line of spectators. Somebody made a joke (rather feeble) about conquerors biting the dust, and the rest laughed at it. This encouraged a second wag, and then another; and from that moment all these Frenchmen stood consoled for the capture of their town, for the requisitions, and for everything else that might happen to them that day, by the thought that three of their vanquishers had made themselves ridiculous. Happy the nation whom such episodes can cheer! The remainder of the marching-past went off gaily enough. The on-lookers criticized with much satisfaction, though in whispers, the cut of their enemies' coats, the poker-like rectitude of their backbones, the absence of pipe-clay on their belts, and, of course, their military tactics, which were generally voted absurd.

There was at least one person, however, among the throng whose sentiments did not undergo the same variations of cloud and sunshine as those which have just been noticed, and this was a young and

fair-haired girl of twenty. In the morning—some two hours before the Prussian entry—there had driven into O—a well-appointed carriage, drawn by two horses, and bearing an old gentleman and his daughter. This carriage stopped at a chemist's shop, then at a surgical-bandage maker's, and lastly at one of those dépôts where all the appurtenances of a private ambulance might be bought—lint, linen, camp-beds, &c.; and at all these places the old man and the young girl were received with marks of almost exaggerated respect. It is true that the carriage displayed a coronet on its panels, which may account, in some way, for this deference; but it is also certain that the young girl was divinely beautiful, and that had she been anybody else but a duke's daughter, it would have made little difference in the amount or in the quality of the homage which men would have strewed upon her path. There are faces towards which all men feel drawn, and whose claims to absolute worship nobody calls in question. Hers was one of them. It was a face that would have made a craven feel chivalrous, and would have spurred a naturally honourable man to deeds of valour or sacrifice such as those of which legends tell. On the other hand, heaven help the man who should fall in love with such a face and not have his love requited! His life would become a torment, for he could never forget those features, with their sweet, grave expression—never!

The Duke—a slight, thin-visaged man of about sixty, who walked with a stiff knee and leaned for support on a stick—was essentially a French nobleman of that school who have sent the present age to Coventry. A Legitimist he was; not cynical or morose, but one of those who can feel no sort of sympathy for modern ideas; are intimately persuaded that they will all break down; and, pending this consummation, hold aloof, washing their hands of politics and of everything else which may bring them into active contact with a world which they neither understand nor esteem. One could read his character, his prejudices, his proclivities on his face as in an open book. He was dignified but cold; his manners were marked by the most perfect courtesy, but—except when he was talking to persons of his own rank—there was in them just the slightest tincture of sarcasm, as if he were constantly expecting that his interlocutor was going to commit himself to some outrageous proposition, and as if his not doing so were a matter of surprise to

him. It is superfluous to mention that although in the month of October last, France was already in the enjoyment of Republican institutions, nobody would have ventured to address the Duke otherwise than by his title. Thrones might fall and constitutions vanish, kings or emperors might be deposed and Frenchmen citizenize one another to their heart's content; but throughout all changes and chances this nobleman was Duc de Bressac, and meant to remain so.

"Then I will have all those articles sent up to the castle, Monsieur le Duc," said the shopman of the ambulance dépôt obsequiously, as he escorted the noble customer and his daughter back to their carriage, after they had remained more than an hour making purchases.

"If you please, M. Galuche," said the Duke, hoisting himself into the carriage by the aid of his stick and his footman's arm.

"And you will try to let us have them as early as possible, M. Galuche," added Mademoiselle de Bressac, in a pleading voice.

"They shall be at the castle as soon as ever the roads are clear, Mademoiselle," answered florid M. Galuche, bowing low; and so saying he drew out his watch. "It is now close upon twelve, Mademoiselle—as the troops are to enter in another half-hour, it would scarcely be safe to send now; the roads must be already blocked."

"But I thought the entry was not to commence till two," exclaimed the Duke in surprise. "I had timed our coming so that we might get all our shopping done, and be back before they came in."

"There was a countermand last night, M. le Duc," replied the shop-keeper, renewing his bows. "The troops were not to have come in till the afternoon. Yesterday we were enjoined to be in readiness to receive them at twelve o'clock."

M. Galuche had no very cogent reasons for detesting the war, for it had developed his particular branch of commerce in a way that was most satisfactory, and commerce was what M. Galuche naturally regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of man's aims and thoughts here below. Nevertheless, finding himself in the presence of M. de Bressac, whose views were probably not commercial, he felt it binding upon him to show that the ancient patriotism of the citizens of O—had not degenerated in his person, so he pursued with sudden lugubriousness: "Yes, twelve o'clock—a terrible event this, for our good town of

O—, M. le Duc. I, for my part, have to lodge six of these brigands in my house—I received the billet-order this morning. Six of them!” and he drew, or pretended to draw, a sigh, very miserably.

“What are we to do now?” asked M. de Bressac perplexedly of his daughter. “We shall have to remain here half the day.”

“If M. le Duc will so far honour me,” broke in M. Galuche, with gasping alacrity, “I have a drawing-room above my shop where Mademoiselle could sit whilst the army was marching by. There is a capital view from the window.”

“God forbid!” cried the Duke, biting his lips as if he had had a spasm; and to the unspeakable chagrin of M. Galuche he saw a look of pain flit over the nobleman’s features, and indignation flash from the eyes of Mlle. de Bressac.

“I—a—of course did not mean that Mademoiselle should look at the march-past; that I know—a—would be too—too—distressing,” blundered he, in a luckless endeavour to rectify his mistake. “I only intended to pray that Mademoiselle would do me the honour of accepting a shelter in my house, and partaking of such humble refreshment as it is in my power to offer.”

But M. Galuche was saved the trouble of further apology by a loud flourish of trumpets which resounded at the end of the street. This he explained had been announced the day before as a signal that the thoroughfares through which the army was to pass were instantaneously to be cleared of all their vehicles; and in effect, a minute or two later a squad of Uhlans—a part of the garrison that had been holding the town for a few days past—debouched at the upper end of the street, rode down it at an amble, and directed the Duke’s coachman to draw up his carriage in a by-lane. The coachman, being English, obeyed without a word; but the footman being French, and old, could not submit to this order without having recourse to the solace of numerous shrugs, muttered oaths, and argumentative pleas, to all of which demonstrations the silent, armed Uhlans paid as much attention as if he had said nothing. Under their directions the carriage was stationed in a small street that led out of the main one, and it was from this point that the Duke and his daughter became the unwilling spectators of the saddest scene which can be given to loyal and patriot eyes.

At first M. de Bressac threw himself

back in his seat without glancing either to the right or left of him, and his daughter did the same, neither speaking. But soon a kind of fascination drew the young girl’s face to the window. She looked fixedly, yearningly, and with a sickening expression of sorrow; and insensibly hot tears began to course each other down her cheeks, whilst her frame trembled as if from cold.

Nobody who has not felt it can realize the sensation of seeing one’s country invaded. As Mlle. de Bressac looked, it seemed to her as if she were draining a cup of humiliation bitter enough and deep enough for a lifetime. No private sorrow could ever touch her like this. Her mother’s death, which had been the one great grief of her young life, had moved her less; the loss of her father, if she lived to suffer it, could not, she thought, cause her pangs more acute and lasting. The soldiers tramped by, the guns jolted over the paving-stones, the hoofs of the horses struck the ground with almost rhythmical cadence; and these sounds, so stirring when it is a friendly cavalcade that produces them, shot throes of positive physical pain through her heart. At last she could bear it no longer, and, shivering all over, drew her head in. As she did so, she involuntarily glanced up, and her eyes encountered those of a Prussian officer, who had been gazing at her as if spellbound for more than half-an-hour.

He was a young man of about six-and-twenty, of strikingly handsome features, and eyes remarkably intelligent and mild. The tasteful light blue uniform with white facings which he was wearing set off to advantage his strong well-knit figure, and he bestrode a powerful charger with ease and grace. Probably he was acting in some sort as marshal, for though Mlle. de Bressac had not noticed him, he had early taken up his position in the street where the carriage stood, and, in company with six mounted soldiers, seemed to be there to keep the crowd back. No doubt his first glance at the beautiful occupant of the brougham had been of the kind which most men throw at pretty women; but, if so, it had quickly changed. The light look of levity in his eyes faded from them, and gave place to an air of generous and manly sympathy as he watched the lovely face bathed in tears, and marked the keen traces of anguish on the young girl’s features.

He threw a glance behind him to see if it would not be possible to take the carriage out of its position, and spare its

owners the rest of the sight; but the alley was a blind one, and its single issue was now closed. Perceiving this, the young officer turned his eyes again with increasing pity on the weeping face, and did not take them off. He gazed at her with an admiration that slowly grew every minute, and which at last became so trance-like that when, towards the end, Mdle. de Bressac withdrew her face from the carriage window and caught his eyes, he started as if from a dream, and, without appearing conscious of what he was doing, raised his white gloved hand to his helmet, and bent to his saddle-bow.

She did not return this salute. Coming from such a quarter, and under such circumstances, it seemed to her an insult, and caused her to flush up to the eyes. The officer had time to perceive that flush, and to guess the meaning of it, and he slightly changed colour. In a few minutes more the triumphal procession was over, and the carriage was enabled to move away. The young Prussian followed it with his eyes until it vanished round the corner of the street.

Then — no longer the same man as he had been an hour before, for what transformations may not be compassed in an hour — he slowly rode off with his men in search of the quartermaster, to ascertain where his billet was. On his way he was far too much engrossed to notice, what he certainly would have, and *had* remarked that same morning, that more than one Frenchwoman turned round to look at him as he rode past, and to remark, "Qu'il n'avait pas mauvaise tournure pour un Prussien."

The quartermaster was standing in front of the town-house with lists in his hand, and a very mob of officers pressing round him. With more respect for the new applicant than his military rank actually warranted, for the young man was but a captain, the high functionary said to him, "Herr Hauptmann, your quarters will be good ones. You are one of a party of twenty who will lodge at the Château de Bressac." Then, in a whisper, "Fine house and capital cellar, Herr Graf. The Duke is one of the richest men in this country, and his daughter they say is —"

But the arrival of more officers cut the remark short, and the captain had to turn his horse again. When out of the throng he called to a workman who was leaning against a post, looking very much as if he had been consoling himself for his country's misfortunes with absinthe, and asked

him for information as to where the château was.

"The Château de Bressac is not quite a league off," hiccupped the Frenchman, with a praiseworthy attempt to look dignified and sober. "You have only to follow the road straight, and, with that horse of yours, you ought to catch up the Duke's carriage, which was here ten minutes ago. Ay, a carriage with soft cushions like mattresses," added he, drawlingly. "A pretty thing for aristos like that to be dragged about under a Republic when good fellows like myself go on foot."

"Was it a carriage drawn by a pair of bays, and with a lady inside?" asked the Prussian.

"Ay, that's it — two bays that are fed better than many a good Republican, I'll be bound; and the lady inside was Mdle. Fleur de Lys, the Duke's daughter."

The officer put his hand into his pocket, and threw the man a napoleon.

## II.

MDLE. FLEUR DE LYS, or Mdle. Lili, as people more affectionately called her, was the only child of the Duke de Bressac. She had had a brother, but he died in boyhood, and since then she had been the object upon whom all her father's affection, pride, and ambition centred. A love such as that which her father bore her would have been enough to spoil most children, but it had not spoiled her. Though she ruled supreme at Bressac, where her least whim was law and her slightest wish a command, she exercised her sovereignty sensibly, and was not renowned anywhere about the country for capriciousness or eccentricity. The only thing people said about her was that she was proud — "kind-hearted, but proud," was their term; and this estimate of her character was no bad one, if by pride was meant that she had a shrinking horror of everything that was mean or common-place, and set up for herself an ideal of human nature that was as much above the real thing as heaven is above the earth. This was, indeed, the rock upon which a good deal of Mdle. Lili's future peace was likely to split; for ideals are dangerous things in the navigation of life. Mdle. Lili could not understand that the purest of human natures, like the purest of coins, contain some small particle of alloy. Having passed all the leisure hours of her girlhood reading the books of chivalry with which the old library of the castle was stored, and having ever present be-



fore her eyes the example of her own father, whose scrupulousness was so nice that it almost amounted to the pedantry of honour, she would have had every man be wholly brave, generous, courteous, and disinterested. And the worst of it was, that she gave every man credit for these qualities before knowing him, whence it would happen that as few men—or, to speak more correctly, none—ever did full honour to the list of virtues with which she had debited them, she generally relegated them, after a few days' acquaintance, to the obscurest background of her thoughts, amongst things tried and found wanting. This was the reason why, at twenty, Mdlle. Fleur de Lys was not yet married. Suitors had wooed her in plenty; but one had seemed not quite brave; a second was too fond of money; a third's manners were bad; a fourth was brave and disinterested enough, but was prone to tattle; and so on. It must be said that, in dismissing her suitors, Mdlle. de Bressac never did so in a way that could shock them, or make them guess that they had displeased her. She was not only too well bred, but too kind and compassionate, to cause anybody wilful pain. Only when a lover failed to come up to her standard of perfection, he simply found that he made no progress in his wooing—that was all.

On coming back to Bressac from the town of O—, Mdlle. Fleur de Lys was in a state of feverish and throbbing agitation, such as her father had never known her in before. What most shocked her in the cruel spectacle of the morning was the attitude of the inhabitants. "To think," cried she, clasping her hands in an intensity of bitterness—"to think that there were young men in those crowds, men of twenty and thirty, who were not ashamed to come out on the pavements to stare at our enemies and jeer at them! To jeer, when they had not the courage to fight! Oh, cowardice, treble cowardice of men! Where has all the chivalry of France flown? Why, in a war like this, every house ought to have become a fortress, every village a citadel. Battlements? What need had we of them if our men had been fearless and resolved to face death, as the women and children of Saragossa did in fighting against us? France outdone in valour by a small Spanish town! We are not only beaten, we are dishonoured. No woman will ever be able to look at Frenchmen and feel proud of them. We have fallen so low in spirit, that fifty years hence men will ask of

what clay their fathers were made to have patiently stood all this." Here she broke out into sobs, and her father tried to appease her; but it was not much of an effort, for the Duke was too painfully disgusted himself with the tameness shown by his countrymen to be able to find many excuses for them. Those degrading hauls, as he called them, of a hundred thousand armed prisoners at a time, those meek surrenders of large cities, those incredible acts of subservience on the part of corporate bodies, and, worse than all, the rampant bragging of press and public orators, which added ridicule to what was already contemptible enough, filled him with dismay. All that he could find as a palliation for so much shame was the argument that France had become crazed, and was no longer herself. "The people have gone speech-mad," he would say resignedly: "When we see a country like this being governed by a dozen cracked barristers, it means that the age of action is past. Government, nowadays, signifies quibbling. The first time a nation of fighting men turns round on us, we must obviously go to the wall, as we are doing now. And it is useless organizing armies," added he. "Why should peasants or workmen go out to fight? The barristers who govern us have taught them: that there is no such thing as God, no religion, no family, no property; that all men are equal, and owe no respect to one another; that all nations are one, and that the idea of a separate allegiance to a mother country is an antiquated barbarism. Good—then why risk one's life? If there is nothing in one's country worth defending, if a man is to worship only himself, then the soundness of his own skin must evidently be his paramount object, and he had better see to it." Nevertheless, the Duke had subscribed largely to the organization of the armies in which he did not believe; and he would certainly have enlisted himself, had it not been for his lameness (due to a wound in a duel twenty years before), which precluded his being of any use. As it was, he would have been quite ready to defend his own castle; but he and his daughter would have had to defend it alone, for at the first hint of barricading the castle, the servants had with one voice declared their intention of being no participators in such rashness. To be sure, there was one dissentient—the English coachman. Judging the thing from a cool and phlegmatic point of view, this functionary expressed his readiness to fight

if his grace pleased, but "didn't see the use of it."

Happily Mdle. de Bressac had domestic details to attend to on her return from O——, which obliged her to rouse herself from the state of prostration to which the morning's events had reduced her. Declining to join in the popular cry as to Prussian brigands, clock-robbers, and the rest of it, the Duc de Bressac had decided that the officers billeted upon him should be received with all the regard due to valiant opponents. It was only a lawyers' government, he said, which could seek to traduce courageous enemies by accusing them of filching. So Mdle. Fleur de Lys had to see that the twenty best bed-rooms in the castle and all the state apartments were prepared as though to receive honoured guests, the Duke merely reserving for himself and his daughter a small suite of rooms in the most retired part of the house. Then, when this was done, Mdle. Fleur de Lys donned a white apron and went into a wing of the castle which had been converted into an ambulance, and where half-a-dozen French officers and soldiers, wounded in the battle near O——, were being tended. Amongst the private soldiers was a cousin of Mdle. de Bressac's, the Marquis de Criquetot.

He was fairly rich, this pale marquis of eight-and-twenty, and during the halcyon period of the Second Empire had devoted his mind to horse-racing. He was generally to be met with either at Chantilly or Newmarket, with an eyeglass screwed carefully into his left eye, a dust-coat thrown over his arm, and the gilt clasp of a betting-book peeping out of his breast-pocket. There were few races run without a horse of his appearing at the post, and few horses of his appeared at the post without being beaten. This, however, did not seem to interfere much with his enjoyment of the sport, and he continued a fervent follower of it, until one summer being on a visit to Bressac, he was so smitten with his cousin's charms, that he forthwith sold his stud, discarded his eyeglass, threw his betting-book into the fire, and begged permission of the Duke to sue for his daughter's hand. He was in the very midst of his courtship when the war broke out. Thinking the army would swallow up the Prussians easily enough without him, he did not in the first instance stir; but after Woerth, when Government appealed to all the men of goodwill in France, Mdle. Fleur de Lys sent him to enlist as a private soldier, and away he went just as he

would have gone and thrust his head into a cannon's mouth had she bidden him. He fought at Sedan and was taken prisoner, but escaped. Then he joined an army in course of formation in the provinces, and conducted himself with such gallantry, that a peripatetic Pro-consul sent out of Paris by balloon, offered him a colonelcy, which he declined, and the cross of honour, which he accepted. At the battle of O——, a bullet discharged from a Bavarian rifle fractured his collar-bone, and for the moment cut his military career short.

Had the young soldier been in any other ambulance, there is no doubt he might have repined over this mishap, but as things were he managed to bear up. His wound was not dangerous, only troublesome and requiring rest, and this rest he gave it by lounging on a sofa with his right arm in a sling, smoking a good deal, and when his cousin or his uncle were not there to talk with him, reading novels. He was engaged in this way when Fleur de Lys de Bressac glided into his room with one of the potions which doctors prescribed for him, and which he drank with faith because she mixed them. Dressed in black merino, with neat white collar and cuffs, and her rich masses of auburn hair sheltered by a small white crape cap, she looked as sweet a personification of an ambulance nurse as it was possible to conceive. Moving across the room with noiseless steps, she came to her cousin's side and laid down her tray on the table near him; then in the gentle voice that always made him thrill, she said: "Do you feel better, mon cousin?"

He had thrown away his cigarette and laid down his book on her entrance.

"I always feel better when you are here, and relapse when you are out of sight," he answered half-seriously, half-gaily. "But tell me, cousin, your eyes are red, you have been crying?"

"Yes," she said, with a faint sigh, and began to stir his potion in its teacup. "Mon cousin, you must drink this. It is a little bitter, but the doctor says it will make you sleep."

He quaffed the drug as if it had been the divinest nectar, taking several draughts to make the pleasure last longer. Then he wiped his lips and exclaimed: "It is better than burgundy, cousin."

Whilst he was drinking, Fleur de Lys had mechanically taken up the book he had been reading. It was one of M. Théophile Gautier's popular productions. On seeing the title she laid it down again and

turned a silent but eloquent glance of surprise and sorrow at him: "Mon cousin," she said at length, "I did not think you could have the heart to read such things as this now."

He did not seem to understand, and held the handkerchief he had been carrying to his lips midway in the air, astonished: "Why, it's a volume of Gautier's poems, cousin."

"Gautier's poems, whilst the Prussians are flaunting their standard in our town of O——, whilst they are on their way to take up their quarters in this very house!" she rejoined. "I can see, cousin, that the modern doctrines of internationalism must have struck very deep if a man of your birth feels so lightly for his country's ruin."

He turned red and answered a little abashed: "Don't be hard on me, cousin. Time hangs so heavy on my hands when you are not here, that I must needs find a way of killing it. Besides, I have not read much: see, here is the book-marker in the third page. I always think of something else whilst I am reading now."

"And there is only one thing of which you should think," she replied, coldly: "the preparing yourself for the day when we shall avenge these outrages that have been put upon us. Who is to set the example of regenerating our country if not our class? You refused a colonelcy on the field because you said you were not fit for it, and if you thought so you acted honourably. But why do you not fit yourself? If I were a man I would not rest until I had learned military tactics, and the language of our enemies, so as to be ready for the day when we shall re-invade *their* country."

There was a pause. The young soldier looked dejectedly at his bandaged arm, and stroked his forehead thoughtfully with his free hand.

"I am afraid I belong to a poor generation, cousin," he said, in a low voice. "But you must guide me. I can do what I am told to do, and I will obey you blindly. This is the last time I shall open a novel until I have learned German and the drill-book."

"If every gentleman in France did the same, you would be revenged in less than five years," she exclaimed, with vehemence.

"Perhaps every gentleman in France would, if he had you to command him, cousin," was his smiling answer; and as Fleur de Ly's hand still rested on the table, he raised it to his lips and kissed it.

"Yes, but you will not have discharged all your duty, cousin," she continued, gently disengaging herself, "even when you have repaid our enemies, blow for blow, all they have done to us. A gentleman should devote himself to exterminating those blasphemous and disloyal theories that have brought us so low. What they call universal suffrage is an impiety. It is handing over a great nation, with traditions and a name, to the custody of all who are ignorant debased, and corrupt. The people are like children. They should be ruled and protected against themselves by the classes who have education and religion."

This time the *marquis's* face assumed a rather rueful expression. "I make no doubt of our soon turning the tables upon the Prussians," he remarked; "but to wage a war against universal suffrage is — is —"

"Is what?" she asked proudly.

But he was spared the unpleasantness of explaining what he meant; for at that moment there was a knock at the door, and a servant entered. It was the same footman who had driven into O—— with the carriage in the morning; one of those old French servants dressed in impossible liveries that never fit them, and with a grumbling, patronizingly familiar tone, that always makes one doubt whether they are not going to sit down by your side after handing the dishes round. On the strength of his having been an incalculable number of years in the family, this footman felt himself privileged to act chorus, as it were, to all the conversations carried on within his hearing. Indeed, before the war, he had been generally regarded as a successful copy of Caleb Balderstone, whose virtues would prove to be shining gold on the day of trial. But when the day of trial came, in the shape of the Duke's proposal to entrench himself in his castle, and defend it to the last drop of his own and his servants' blood, Jean-Baptiste Barbecruche had revealed unmistakably that, if he liked the Duke, there was somebody he loved still better, and that was Jean-Baptiste Barbecruche. Nevertheless, he was not aware that his candid display of egotism had in any way disappointed anybody, or cooled in the smallest degree his employer's faith in his perfections; so that it was in much his usual tone of having pondered the orders he had been commissioned with, and being unable to vouchsafe them his approval, that, addressing his young mistress, he said: — "Mademoiselle, M. le Duc has sent me to say that he begs you to

come downstairs and assist him in receiving those Prussians. To receive those people in state, can you understand that? For my part, it disgusts me; and I said to M. le Duc, 'Rather than face a Prussian, Monseigneur, I would shut myself up in the kitchen, and live there six weeks.' But Monseigneur purposes to hand over all his keys to them, and to beg their permission to live in retirement during their presence. Beg their permission, forsooth! just as if they were masters, and we, the owners of the castle, were nobodies! Said I to Monsieur le Duc, 'Truly things have come to a pretty pass, Monseigneur, when I, an old servant, receive such orders as that!' But Monseigneur told me to mind my own business; and he begs, Mademoiselle, that you will not delay, as a detachment of officers were already riding up the avenue. Yes, and I saw them myself through a window coming up — a jolter-headed lot, with veritable cannibal faces; scoundrels that'll be getting drunk off our wines, and sprawling with their muddy boots on our best beds. Ah, the scamps, the cut-throats, the —"

"I think that is enough," cried Mdlle. de Bressac, stopping him with an authoritative wave of the hand, and turning on him a glance of cool contempt. "You will have earned the right to insult those soldiers, Jean-Baptiste, when you have had the spirit to defy them. Meanwhile, you will have to learn this lesson, that those who have not the heart to fight, must have the courage to slave. During all the time that the Prussian officers remain in this house, you will wait upon them every day, and do it respectfully. If you prefer shutting yourself up in a kitchen, you are free to follow your choice, but you will select some other kitchen than that of Bressac."

A lashing with a whip could not have more completely disconcerted and cowed the unfortunate Jean-Baptiste. He opened his lips to speak; but meeting the eyes of his mistress fixed on him implacably, as if awaiting an answer, he judged it prudent to say nothing. It was only when Mdlle. de Bressac had swept out of the room, after bending her head slightly towards her cousin, that he summed up his impressions by lifting his hands ceiling-wards and exclaiming, "Bandits de Prussiens! It's they who are the cause of all this. If our poltroon army had only fought like men! But soldiers are hares, now-a-days. In my time it was very different!" And forgetting the wounded Marquis de Criquetot, who had enjoyed the benefit of this remark, and was smiling at it, he re-

peated, "Ay, ay, very different!" and shuffled, mumbling, downstairs.

Half-an-hour later the entrance-hall of Bressac was the scene of a gathering such as the old walls of the castle, and the pictures of mailed knights that hung upon them must have witnessed with a stupefaction unparalleled in the course of their inanimate existence. The Duke de Bressac, attired in black, and with his daughter by his side, was standing at a table on which lay a few large keys. Behind him, in a half circle, were ranged his household; and facing this group thronged a showy cluster of Prussian officers, whose steel spurs and heavy scabbards clanked on the marble of the tessellated flooring. There had been a little uneasiness on the faces of these officers as they neared the castle. They were not sure what kind of reception would be given them; and, though quite able and ready to over-ride sulkiness, or any other form of active or passive antagonism, they naturally preferred that their relations with such a man as the Duke de Bressac should be as exempt from disagreeable incidents as was possible. And in this they were not disappointed. The Duke bowed to them with courtesy, and was answered by that peculiarly formal yet not ungraceful salute which is in usage in the Prussian army. Then, speaking to them in their own tongue and with a voice that quavered but little, all things considered, he said,—

"Gentlemen, the hazards of war have brought you as masters into a house where, under other circumstances, I should have been glad to receive you as guests. I shall not importune you much with my presence whilst you are here, for my daughter and I will beg your permission to keep to our own apartments; but the rest of the house will be yours. My steward has orders to take your pleasure, and will deliver you these keys. This particular key (and he drew one from his pocket) is that of a gallery of heirlooms. You will allow me, General, to remit it to you in person." And, stepping forward, he tendered it to the chief officer present, who turned it over once or twice in his hands, reddened — but eventually pocketed it.

A pin might have been heard to drop whilst this scene was being enacted. Then the Duke gave his arm to his daughter and made for the door, the officers parting in two rows to the right and left of them, and raising their hands to their helmets. But just as the party were on the threshold an officer darted out of the throng, picked up a glove which had been left on

the table, and hurrying after Mdlle. de Bressac, said in French, "You have forgotten your glove, Mademoiselle."

She lowered her head to thank him, and recognized the same officer whom she had seen that morning. He also wore the same expression on his face which had displeased her then. But somehow it did not displease her now, for, stopping to take the glove from his hand, she noticed that that hand shook, and that there were tears in his eyes.

## CHAPTER III.

"I CANNOT make out what has come over Leoneizen," exclaimed fat Hauptmann Maximilian Koch, some six weeks after this, one evening at mess in the castle dining-room.

"Very singular," protested another fat Hauptmann, Ferdinand von Schweippe, cutting up a plump and tender quail; "he doesn't eat."

"Nor drink," ejaculated a third Hauptmann, rosy and tall, raising to his lips a glass of the Duke de Bressac's rubiest claret.

"The fact is," laughed handsome, slim-waisted Lieutenant von Wespe, with a glance round him to see that there were none but his brother officers present,—"the fact is, Leoneizen is in love. I am sure of it."

"A man who is in love should eat and drink twice more than a man who isn't, for love wastes," remarked tremendously corpulent Colonel Herr Graf von Wurstpätzen; and as he was the presiding officer that evening, and had laughed whilst uttering his joke, all the other officers laughed with him in concert. This, by the way, is the rule. A colonel laughs, everybody laughs. Discipline could not exist without it.

"But whom does he love?" inquired Hauptmann Koch, between two mouthfuls of game.

"Yes, let's have the name!" gobbled the second fat Hauptmann, much relishing his plump bird.

"Ah that's *his* secret," laughed the slim Lieutenant. "One mustn't betray."

"A love-secret is no secret," exclaimed the tall and rosy Hauptmann, helping himself to more claret. "Those things always transpire."

"And if they don't, the parties best pleased are not always the lovers themselves," observed the corpulent Colonel, with a new laugh. At which the whole table guffawed again like one man.

"Since the Herr Colonel is of that opinion,"

ion, I may as well say that one need not have many pairs of eyes to guess who is the beauty that has turned our friend's head," sniggered the slim Lieutenant.

"I have guessed already," said, with a broad smile, Hauptmann Otto Nadelaugen, a penetrating, round-faced Hauptmann, with spectacles. "It is——"

"Hush!" whispered all the officers together; for the door had opened, and the footman, Jean-Baptiste Barbecruche, was sailing in with a tray covered with sweet dishes. It should be mentioned J. B. Barbecruche had thought better of his resolution of never facing the Prussians. Between his patriotism and the prospect of losing his place at Bressac the worthy man had not long hesitated. His sentiments had even flown with rapidity from one extreme to the other, and he now got on capitally with cannibal-visaged foemen whom his French soul had execrated. He was garrulous, civil, and confidential, and was even good enough to patronize his new masters as he had done his old ones.

"Charlotte Russe, or Plom-pouding au rhom, Monsieur le Comte?" he asked, pausing on the Colonel's left; "let me advise Monsieur le Comte to try the plom-pouding; our chef has excelled himself."

"You don't happen to have seen M. le Capitaine de Leoneizen, have you, M. Jean-Baptiste?" asked the penetrating Hauptmann with the spectacles. "He is missing at our board."

"Pardon me, mon Capitaine, M. le Comte de Leoneizen was seated in the Pagoda Garden, drawing, almost all the afternoon. It is true that at dusk I lost sight of him. Perhaps he is gone to the town."

"Perhaps," echoed Hauptmann Nadelaugen. But when M. Jean-Baptiste had retired, after disposing of his dainties and uncorking more bottles of Pomard, Chambertin, and Château Lafite, the same Hauptmann re-exclaimed, with his spectacles beaming, "The Pagoda Garden! This is the twentieth time I have seen or heard of Leoneizen in the Pagoda Garden. It is that which joins the private orchard, where the snow-like Fräulein Fleur de Lys takes her walks; also there is a footpath skirting it, which leads to the village of Bressac, where the Fräulein goes often to tend the sick."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the officers.

"Heh! heh!" winked the Colonel. "Nadelaugen talks as if he had been reconnoitring the enemy's citadel on his own account, and found it already invested." At which pleasantry, as usual,



there was an immense deal of merriment. "However," continued the Herr Colonel von Wurstspatzen, filling his glass, "if one of the King's officers can carry back to Germany as his bride the Fräulein Fleur de Lys, he will have made his Majesty present of as fair a subject as any in all beautydom. It will be a conquest like Metz. Here's to the health of the conqueror!" and the good-humoured corpulent Count von Wurstspatzen drained his glass dry and smacked his lips after it.

Of course, everybody followed suit in the toast, for, as in laughing, so in drinking, when the Colonel drinks everybody drinks, this being a necessity of discipline. But when the penetrating Hauptmann with the spectacles had set back his glass on the tablecloth, after exclaiming, "To the conqueror!" he turned his shining spectacles on his superior, and said, grinning: "I have drunk, Herr Colonel, but I do not think it is one of us who will carry away the fair Fräulein. That wounded Marquis, who is our prisoner on parole, the Herr von Cricquetot, seems to think and dream only of her — yet, to be sure, she does not appear to think only of him. They are cousins, and go as brother and sister together."

"I saw them walking in the garden the other day, he with his right arm in a sling, she leaning on the other arm," remarked the tall, rosy Hauptmann, who had become more rosy still from the claret. "There is that in a woman's mere way of walking with a man," added he, pensively, "which soon whispers to the observer whether she is in love or not — and the Fräulein Fleur de Lys is not in love with the Herr Cricquetot."

"The Herr Cricquetot is learning German and drilling," observed the slim Lieutenant von Wespe, as if he thought the thing a good joke. "He stammers German with everybody he can find, and it has got about through these French servants, who spy their masters so well, that he is doing this to please the Fräulein his cousin, and in view of the '*jour de la revanche*!'" And the slim Lieutenant struck what he conceived to be a French attitude of "*revanche*!" by waving one hand above his head and making his eyeballs flame.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed all the officers together, greatly amused.

"We are to hear, then, of the Feld-Marshal Cricquetot crossing the Rhine and besieging Mayence —"

"To take a ham," interrupted the Colonel. And this joke was thought so tran-

scendent that it provoked peal upon peal and appropriately closed the banquet.

The officers were still laughing over the Feld-Marshal Cricquetot and his ham, when, with their caps jauntily perched on the side of their heads, and the middle buttons of their tight tunics unfastened, they sauntered into the conservatory, which led out of the dining-room, to take coffee and to smoke.

#### IV.

MEANWHILE, the several persons who had been made the subjects of the mess-room conversation were engaged in their respective occupations, and for reasons best known to themselves were not so happy as their critics. The young Count Leoneizen, to begin with. Leaning against a tree, through the dry branches of which whistled a keen December wind, this young officer — for whom more than one female heart had beaten, and was, perhaps, beating then, unrequited, at Berlin or Cologne — was straining his eyes to see as far as possible in the night down a dark road, at the end of which twinkled, like one small lamp, the lights of the village of Bressac. Every night the Count Leoneizen came to this tree and gazed down the dark road, for every afternoon Mdlle. de Bressac, attended by her maid, went to the village to carry help and comfort to the sick or wounded, who were being tended in the cottages, and it was seldom that she returned before dusk. So every day the young officer, wrapped in his cloak, leaned against the tree to watch. It pleased him to think that he was in some way guarding over the safety of the woman he loved — that no one could harm her whilst he was there; that, unknown to her, a stout heart and a strong arm were surveying her footsteps, and waiting to shield her at the cost of life from the slightest insult or danger. He had never spoken to her, and never tried to do so. He knew that his love was a hopeless one. Without exchanging a word with Fleur de Lys, he had convinced himself that, even if she were to love him above everything else on earth, she would never give him her hand. Three months before, Friedrich von Leoneizen had started upon the war flushed and eager with hopes of promotion and dignities: what were promotion and dignities to him now? What would he not have given could France and Germany have remained at peace — ay, even if he had never won an honour in his life, so that he should only have been free to woo Fleur de Lys as his wife? But it was no use wishing.

The greatest happiness he could expect now was to come and watch for Fleur de Lys' going and coming every day. By these means he saw her five minutes in every twenty-four hours—and it was enough.

And yet there were days when his slight happiness was cruelly marred for him; and on the evening when his brother officers were making merry at his expense, he was leaning against his tree with all the pangs of bitter jealousy gnawing at his heart. He could bear to think of Fleur de Lys never being his, but that she should become another's was a thought that maddened him. On this afternoon he had seen her for the third or fourth time go by, not with her maid, but with M. de Crique-tot, who was now well enough to take short walks; and the handsome, strong, and amorous German did not easily imagine that Fleur de Lys could love such a dandified, insignificant person as this French marquis appeared to him to be; yet he knew enough of French marriages to be aware that M. de Crique-tot might very well win Mlle. de Bressac without her being more fond of him than of a pet lap-dog. So he clenched his fists till the nails almost ran into the flesh; and the wind seemed to him more bleak and moanful that night than ever; and the country around, enshrouded in its stillness, looked inexpressibly blank, desolate, and sepulchral.

But if Count Leoneizen was depressed, things fared little better with his French rival. In fact, they fared worse, for the German had at least the consolation of knowing that if his passion was hopeless, the fault was not his, but that of events; whereas the Marquis who perceived that he was making no advance in his suit, was fain to adopt as the reason that he had not the qualities in him which make a man loved. Fleur de Lys was always kind to him. Her manner was gentle and sisterly; and he felt little doubt that if he asked her to be his wife, she would consent, to reward him for having gone so obediently and risked his life at her bidding. But he was too generous to require of her anything in the nature of a sacrifice. He wished to be loved, and, failing that, he had strength and chivalry enough to support his disappointment nobly. It is only little hearts that can bear a grudge against a woman for not loving them; generous minds have ever such a sense of their own inferiority beside the woman they worship, that they are prepared for indifference as almost their due. Yet Louis de Crique-tot

would have been glad to ascertain whether his cousin's indifference towards him was of a kind which might be dispelled by patience on his part, or whether her heart was engaged to anybody else. All he knew was, that of late a change seemed to have come over her. She was quieter, more absorbed. Sometimes sitting with work in her lap, she would pause five minutes between two stitches; and during those five minutes a vague, desponding expression would steal into her eyes, and she would gaze before her as if unconscious of anybody's presence. Then some movement would startle her, and make her resume her sewing, with a blush mantling on her cheek.

All these symptoms could be perceptible only to a lover's eyes. To others, Mlle. de Bressac was what she had always been; though perhaps there were some of the more observant amongst the others who did notice that Mlle. de Bressac was not quite the same in her remarks upon the war as a month or two ago. The news of lost battles still made her turn pale; at the recital of horrors suffered by the inhabitants of ruined villages she still shed tears of compassion; but in talking with her cousin about the future of France, she no longer spoke of the necessity of Frenchmen being prepared to resist invasions, and seldom, of the necessity of their invading others; which change was naturally attributed to a prudent wish not to compromise herself in the hearing of any of those ubiquitous spies which Count Bismarck was supposed to hold in his service.

The Marquis had escorted his cousin to the village at her own request, because she thought that the walk might do him good; otherwise he would not have intruded himself, for he was growing sensitive lest she might think he meant to importune her with his attentions. But the invitation, being the third or fourth in succession, had touched and pleased him; and whilst Fleur de Lys was helping to dress the wound of a stalwart young cottager, whom a fragment of shell had laid low, he sat by a spluttering wood-fire, that was wreathing clouds of cheerless yellow smoke, and watched her.

Watched her as only lovers can watch, and with an aching heart to think that so much grace and beauty could never be his. The cottage was a wretchedly mean one—one of those hovels common in the centre and west of France, where a whole family are lodged in a single room, which has a stall in the corner of it for a cow.

And yet Fleur de Lys' presence lit up this sty as if it were a palace chamber.

As she stood leaning over the sick man's bed, and applying bandages with the light touch and womanly care of one whose soul is in her work, she looked beautiful and loveable beyond what she had ever seemed to her cousin when dressed in silks and jewels. What diamonds, indeed, can rival the lustre of a woman's eyes when performing an office of charity? M. de Criquetot, as he sat with his elbow resting on his knee and his head buried in his hand, thought with bitterness of his wasted life, which had sown in him the germ of no single great quality that could charm and win a noble woman. Whilst he was thus immersed in his reflections, the dressing of the wound came to an end, and the patient blurted out, in grateful but energetic *patois*, "You cannot think what good you are doing me, Mademoiselle!"

"May the Virgin bless you, my good young lady," took up the man's wife in a brogue quite as strong. "I sometimes think, though, you must be the blessed Virgin in person."

M. de Criquetot had risen, and was assisting Fleur de Lys to put on her grey hood and cloak.

"You have everything you want now, Mère Marchelat?" she asked, buttoning the cloak, which covered her completely, like a nun's dress.

"Everything, Mademoiselle, thanks to heaven and you. Monsieur Galuche, of the ambulance dépôt at O—, sent us more linen yesterday; and M. Jean-Baptiste came down from the castle with wine this morning. Then, as to tobacco——" But here the woman stopped short, and bit her lips, as if she had committed a blunder.

"What about tobacco?" asked Mdlle. de Bressac; "Marchelat must smoke his pipe." And, drawing out her purse, she went up to an earthen-ware tobacco-jar that stood on a shelf, "This is to buy you tobacco; but mind, you must not smoke too much, mon ami." And saying this, she raised the lid of the jar, to drop her coin in; but the jar was already full to the brim, and sticking out of the fresh tobacco was the bowl of a new, handsomely-carved brier-root pipe.

The woman was biting the corner of her apron, the man in the bed looked sheepish.

"What a fine pipe!" exclaimed Mdlle. de Bressac, taking it out and examining it. "The carving of these figures on it is admirable; but it is not a French pipe."

I have seen things like it—let me see, where? Yes, it was in the Hartz mountains of Germany." . . .

The woman, who had grown distressfully red, sprang forward, clasping her hands.

"Oh, forgive us, Mademoiselle. We know we did wrong; but we won't accept anything of them again!"

"Forgive you for what?" asked Fleur de Lys.

"I mean, Mademoiselle, you had made us all promise in the village, two months ago when the Prussians were coming, that we would accept nothing whatever of them, but that when we had need of anything we should come to the castle for it; and believe me, Mademoiselle, we would never have taken anything from the others—no, we would sooner have died—but this one is not like the others; believe me, he is not."

"No," groaned the man in the bed; "he's not like the others."

Fleur de Lys restored the pipe to its place.

"Whom do you mean by 'this one'?" she inquired; and somehow it seemed to the Marquis that her voice trembled a little.

"We do not know his name," whimpered the woman, still distressed; "but he wears a light blue coat, and has such a handsome face, and such mild eyes, that you would never take him for a Prussian. The other day young Michel, the hump-backed son of our neighbor Ribot, fell down the sand-pit half-a-league off here, and his mother was almost beside herself after nightfall, when he didn't come back, and she couldn't learn what had become of him. Well, towards eleven, when the whole village was already talking about it, and running right and left to make inquiries, this Prussian arrived, carrying the hunchback in his arms, as if it had been a child. There was nothing but a sprained ankle; only Michel might have remained in the pit a week if the Prussian hadn't heard him shout, and scrambled down all amongst the mud and gravel to help him out. After that he took to coming every day to see the Ribots and to talk with Michel; and that's how he got to hear of us. It's a sort of angel dressed up as a brigand, that Prussian is, Mademoiselle. He has all the gentleness of a woman, with the strength of a lion, and when he talks to Marchelat, he says just the things that pick him up and prevent him from feeling down-hearted. Then, he knows everything. He told us how to plant our vegetables in the garden there, so that they might get more of the

sun and be bigger; then he showed us that by hanging that sheet of tin slantwise under the mantel-shelf there, the chimney would leave off smoking; and he got up himself on a ladder, and nailed that bit of board over the hole in the ceiling, where the rain used to come in. And for all that, he has that about him, *Mademoiselle*, that you never feel tempted to call him anything but *Monsieur* or *Mon Capitaine*. Ah, if *Marchelat* and his comrades had had officers like that, they would have been eating their soup in *Berlin* by this time."

*Mlle. de Bressac* said nothing. There was only — her cousin remarked — a slight nervous shaking of her fingers as she fastened the last button of her cloak.

The woman *Marchelat* looked for a reply, and doubtless misinterpreting the expression of *Fleur de Lys'* face and the passing quiver of the lips, ejaculated, with sudden fire in her eyes, "But what is that *Prussian* to us, *Mademoiselle*, if we are to offend you by seeing him? Say but the word, and I fling this tobacco and pipe into the road-way, and never let the man cross our threshold again:" and with a spring she snatched the jar off the shelf, and dashed the casement open ready to throw —

But *Fleur de Lys* quickly stopped her. "No," she faltered; "keep the things, *Mère Marchelat*, and — and — continue to see this officer. I think we are a little late, *mon cousin*," added she, confusedly; and bidding the cottagers a hasty good-night, she took her cousin's arm and hurried out.

There was no moon or stars; the night was black, and seemed to threaten snow. Recent frosts had rendered the ground so hard, that it was like treading on solid granite. For a few minutes, *M. de Criqueot* and *Fleur de Lys* walked along in silence. Why the *Marquis* kept silent he would have found it hard to explain; but there is an instinct in these things which warns us when to speak and when to restrain ourselves. On her side, *Fleur de Lys* could not have spoken, if she would. The faculty of speech seemed for the moment to have forsaken her. So they proceeded together until *M. de Criqueot* abruptly paused, and said, as though remembering something, "By the way, cousin, we were to have gone to four cottages, and we have only been to three."

"Dear me! We have forgotten the *Merciers*," she murmured, starting from

reverie. "I had promised to bring them a hundred francs for their cottage repairs, and they will be expecting me. But it is almost a *kilomètre* distant, I think."

"Yes," he answered, "and you are tired enough as it is, cousin. Cannot these people wait?"

"They will be disappointed," she replied, shaking her head, "and perhaps be unhappy all the night."

"Well, if that is to be the case, I had better go and carry them the money myself. You can go back to *Marchelat's* cottage, and rest there half-an-hour, and I will take you upon my return."

"But it is already seven," she exclaimed, opening her cloak to consult her watch, "and papa will be waiting dinner for us; he will feel alarmed." She hesitated some moments, and then added, "I think the best way, cousin, will be for you to carry the money, as you suggest, and I will walk on to the castle alone. The distance is not great, and the roads are safe. Nobody would hurt me."

"Hurt you, no," he rejoined, half to himself. "A man would be more than a fiend who could do that."

Still, safe as he believed the roads to be, he was naturally loth to abandon his cousin alone, and after dark, on them; and began pondering whether there were no alternative between this and disappointing the *Merciers*. But he could hit upon nothing; so that, after reiterated assurances on the part of *Fleur de Lys* that she really was not afraid, but would go anywhere and at any hour confident in the chivalry of the neighbourhood, he received from her a small parcel she had made of her hundred francs, and set off with it, running.

Then she pursued her way alone.

And yet not alone; for how was it that on this particular road she felt secure, as she did on no other? How was it that though *Friedrich Leoneizen* had never been seen by her standing on his silent night-vigils, she was as conscious of his presence as though it had been revealed to her day after day by some visible token?

There had been no love-letters; no words exchanged. His love had been voiceless, respectful, concealed. How was it that its least impulses were as well known to her as though they had been breathed into her ear by the tenderest language of passion? How was it that his inmost thoughts rang within her heart as if they had been whispered utterances?

Fleur de Lys walked along with her eyes cast on the ground and a quickening step. She felt the tutelary presence near her, following her, guarding her. She blushed and her heart throbbed; yet she must make no sign that she knew or felt anything. She must never let it be seen that the strong secret love that had twined itself round her being was known or suspected as it was.

So she walked, drawing her cloak close around her and shivering a little, perhaps from the cold. And when she had gone some five hundred yards between the two stiff hedgerows that bordered the narrow way, she arrived at a turning. Here the road grew more narrow and more dark; but she continued bravely and was not alarmed by the sight of two men who came tramping towards her with sticks and bundles over their shoulders, and pipes in their mouths: the men parted, one to either side of her, fingered the képis they were wearing, and wished her a rather queer good-night. Then they stopped, turned round to look after her, as if they were surprised to see a well-dressed woman out so late, removed the pipes from their mouths, and began to confer.

Evidently it was not an honest conference; one had only to look at the men to see that. The repeated defeats of the provincial armies had flooded the war-country with a whole horde of individuals, who, having been burned out of house or home, and feeling little inclination to continue fighting for a hopeless cause, under generals in whom they had no faith, had given themselves up entirely to marauding. A much more dangerous class than the fiercest bands of Uhlans, were these gentry. They broke into deserted houses, attacked defenceless wayfarers, poached, plundered hen-roosts, and when booty was scarce, destroyed all they could lay hands on, fences, abandoned furniture, cottages, all apparently for the simple pleasure of the thing. It was easy to recognize these patriots by their bragging voices and their tattered military clothes; for the better part of them were Mobs and the worst scum of the routed armies. The two men who met Fleur de Lys were of this category. They must have been taken to serve against their will, and have seized the first convenient occasion for levanting; for both were young men, only weak striplings, blear-eyed and pale-faced, like the lowest types of workmen in great cities.

Their conference did not last long. They shook the ashes out of their pipes,

slipped the pipes into their pockets, and stealthily retraced their footsteps. Then Friedrich Leoneizen, whose watch-tree was precisely at the corner where the two roads joined, and whose eyes had from the first moment riveted themselves on the two vagabonds, crept noiselessly along under cover of the hedge and followed them. A great thrill of joy had gone through him as soon as the designs of these men had become evident. Fleur de Lys was alone; he would protect her. Glancing at his supposed antagonists, and then on his own powerful limbs, he could not help laughing a short grim laugh, saying to himself: "If you venture to touch a hair of her head, if you so much as speak an uncivil word to her, I pity you." And with this he unfastened the clasp of his cloak, so as to be unhampered.

The two tramps accosted Fleur de Lys and whined: "Have pity on two poor soldiers who are wounded and have not got enough to carry them home, Madame."

"Two soldiers who have fought in all the battles of this war, Madame," took up the scraggiest of the two.

Without a trace of fear on her countenance, Fleurs de Lys turned round, drew out her purse and was in the act of opening it, when the man who had last spoken made a sudden grab at it and snatched it out of her hand; whilst the second raised his fist to strike the young girl and push her back. But this second performer had reckoned without his host, for before his hand had had time to descend, or even to move an inch, Friedrich Leoneizen had sprung through the hedge, and with a terrific back-hand blow with the pommel of his sword, which he had disdained to unsheath, caused the man to measure his full length on the ground. Then catching the other fellow by the throat, he gripped him so tight between his iron hands that the unhappy wretch's tongue protruded from his mouth and his eyes from their sockets. At the third tough grip he was lying beside his compeer, doubled up like an empty sack and senseless. All this was done in less than half a minute; and then the Prussian, passing in one instant from the extreme of rage to the extreme of calm, stood deferentially uncovered and holding out her purse to Fleur de Lys.

"Here is your purse, Mademoiselle. You have not been over-frightened, I trust?"

"Thank you, Monsieur," she said in a low voice, and pressing her hand to her side; but she did not answer the latter part of his question.



"Will you do me the honour to accept my arm for the rest of the way?" he continued, or rather faltered, for emotion was beginning to gain on him.

With a slight inclination of the head she signed to him that she would. He was then stooping over the bodies of his foes, to see how much injury he had done them.

"There is no vital harm," he remarked, after a moment's inspection. But he drew out his handkerchief and began bandaging one of the men's heads. Then he fetched his cloak to make them both a sort of bed under the hedge, where they could lie until relief was sent them. All this was done with a quiet spirit of humanity that had no ostentation in it, but for that reason was the more striking. Fleur de Lys was very pale, and watched all his movements with an expression which would have strangely cleared his brow and made his heart leap could he have seen it. But he saw nothing. Intent on his work, he loosened the men's collars, bathed their foreheads with water from the ditch; and it was only when he had done everything that could be of any use that he rose, with an apology for having detained her so long, and offered her his arm.

She was going to take it; but, looking into his face before doing so, she held out her hand and said simply, "You have a noble heart."

It was too dark to see whether Friedrich Leoneizen turned pale, or coloured, but he sank on one knee and pressed Mdle. de Bressac's hand to his lips. When he rose his eyes were glistening, and there was a modest yet proud smile on his features, which spoke more gratefully than the deepest tribute of spoken thanks.

"Yes," continued Fleur de Lys, in frank, firm accents, "why should I scruple to say what I feel. There is war between our countries, and for long years we must be enemies. But when you return home, Monsieur, it may be gladness to you to reflect that you at least have not left only ruins and tears behind you."

His voice was sad as he replied: "Enemies, Mademoiselle — must we always be enemies? Will there not be a time when the events of this unhappy year will be forgotten?"

They were then passing near a cottage which had been destroyed by shells. Its roof was gone, large holes were in its walls; the place where the garden had stood was a heap of charred bricks. Mdle. de Bressac silently pointed to this. The Prussian sighed.

"I have been told that sixty-five years ago the village near my own home was like that," he said; and at these words he felt Mdle. de Bressac start. "My mother has often related to me how, being a child, she was carried at night from out a burning house, where her father and mother had both been killed. This was during the Jena campaign. After that battle my father's father, with a few other Prussian noblemen, organized a secret league which was to stir up the peasants to resistance, and save our country from being dismembered. The league was betrayed; my father was seized and tried by a French court-martial; and for the crime of being a patriot was condemned to death."

Fleur de Lys' arm trembled, and her breathing grew quicker.

"I should tell you, Mademoiselle, that there was a Frenchman who tried to save my grandfather," continued the Prussian, in a quiet voice. "Our ancestral home was then filled with French officers, and one of them, who had sat on the court-martial and voted for an acquittal, went personally to the Emperor to obtain a pardon. It was refused, and Napoleon, to punish the officer for what he called his temerity, ordered that he should command the platoon who were to perform the execution. Upon this, the officer broke his sword and threw up his commission. He did more, for resignation being unlawful in time of war, he underwent military degradation, and served through the rest of the campaign as a private soldier. This officer was —"

"Your name, Monsieur?" cried Fleur de Lys, laying both hands on his arm.

"I prefer to give you that of our benefactor, Mademoiselle," answered the Prussian. "It was the Marquis de Bressac, your grandfather."

#### V.

LESS than a fortnight after the above scene a great change had come over the country round Bressac. Surprised and outnumbered by the clever move of a French general, who performed the one brilliant feat of arms (on his side) during the war, the German army occupying O — had been compelled to retreat, to avoid being taken prisoners *en masse*. Great was the rejoicing at O — for three or four days, when it was thought that the cruel tide of defeat was at last going to turn. But at the end of that time people knew that the Germans would not allow their first failure to go unretrieved,

and O—— prepared for another battle. Who then so elated as the Duc de Bressac? The French general had informed him that the castle might offer a useful point of resistance in the coming operations, and had sent a thousand men to encamp in the park and erect barricades there by felling down trees and demolishing outhouses. There were few things of which the Duke was prouder than his trees; but it was with a radiant countenance that he limped about amongst the soldiers, encouraging them as they were hewing down the biggest, and pointing out to them that they might greatly strengthen their barricades by taking all the pedestals of the statues that adorned his garden. The soldiers were amazed, and the General could not forbear expressing his admiration.

"If you only knew, Monsieur le Duc, what resistance I have had to encounter in demolishing some other country houses — houses, too, that would have fitted into a single courtyard of this noble place," added he, glancing, not without regret, at the stately building.

"Our family have enjoyed the possession of this house four centuries, so that we can afford to lose it, *mon Général*," answered the Duke with a smile; and the same afternoon, as he saw an officer of engineers hesitate before ordering the destruction of an exquisite pavilion that stood in the way of the defence works, he took a pickaxe out of his hands and struck the first blow into it himself.

Fleur de Lys, meanwhile, followed the example of her father. Wherever a woman's voice and presence could nerve the arm or raise the spirit of a French soldier, there was she, calm, beautiful, and with stirring words of hope on her lips. The soldiers, reviving the title that was given to Mademoiselle de Montpensier under the wars of the "Fronde," called her "La Grande Mademoiselle;" and such was the enthusiasm she excited, that the more superstitious amongst the soldiers — those who came from Languedoc or Brittany — would try and touch some portion of her dress with their amulets as she walked amongst them, under the belief that it would charm their lives. But the devotion towards her rose to fever-heat when she declared that she had no intention of leaving the castle when the fighting began, but that she would remain in it to the end, *whatever happened*. Even the prudent M. Jean-Baptiste grew valiant then. To be sure, he reflected that, even if it came to the worst, there would al-

ways be the cellar to hide in; and, strengthened by this thought, he gave the reins to his imagination in recounting all that he would do when at length he should have those "gueux de Prussiens" opposite him. "Figure to yourself, Monsieur le Marquis," he cried, with the most feeling gestures, to M. de Criqueot — "figure to yourself that one of those unhung thieves wanted to give me a hundred-franc note when he went away. It was that hobbebody of a Count Leoneizen. You know that lout who used to go mooning about the garden. Said I to him, 'If I were a few years younger, I would teach you what it is to offer money to a Frenchman, you blue whipping-post, you. Hurry out of my sight!' and I threw the note into his face."

"Taking care to pick it up again as it fell, to put it into your pocket," continued the Marquis with a laugh; which speech naturally a little disconcerted M. Jean-Baptiste, whose true reply to the Count had been, "Monsieur le Comte, it is only in Prussia that so much generosity is allied to so much valour. I will keep this note for ever as a souvenir, and wish you not 'Adieu,' but 'Au revoir.'"

But if M. Jean-Baptiste found a sceptical hearer in the Marquis, his tales were listened to with credence enough elsewhere, and the story of how extremely quick the Prussians had vanished from the castle at the news that O—— was going to be attacked, lent not a little impetus to the preparations for defence. The General, however, though he felt how valuable an auxiliary Fleur de Lys would be to him, tried to dissuade her from thus exposing her life: but his eloquence was wasted. "My place is here, General," she said, gravely, once and for all; and from that moment this soldier perceived it would be useless to recur to the matter.

It was only M. de Criqueot who was aware how much heroism it needed on his cousin's part to take this resolution. *He* knew, or, at all events guessed, that Fleur de Lys' heart would no longer be wholly with the combatants around her, as it would have been some weeks before. She had told him cursorily and vaguely how she had been protected by a Prussian officer on that night when she had returned alone from the village; but though the details were few, his lover's instinct had supplied the rest; and putting this and that together, recalling many a stray symptom and incident the true significance of which had escaped him at the time of its occurrence, but the real mean-

ing of which now stood revealed, he had not long remained doubtful as to who his rival was. But of course he had not breathed a word of his suspicions to Fleur de Lys. This was a thing too sacred to be hinted at by a third person. Only the young Frenchman recognizing in the Prussian officer a man more great, generous, and worthy of Fleur de Lys than he felt himself to be, had vowed that if he could bring this man and his cousin together, he would do so.

And so time flew by until the day of battle.

\* \* \* \* \*

It dawned and closed as many other days of battle had done for France during that year. Ill-clad, ill-organized, ill-armed mobs of recruits pitted against science, generalship, and discipline, there could be but one result. By the end of four hours' fighting the French soldiers had been routed. The battle was hopelessly lost, and there was but one point where resistance still continued to be offered — the castle of Bressac.

It had not been much attacked during the day, for it was rather beyond the range of the field where the heat of the day's combat had raged. But in the afternoon, when the enemy were masters of all the positions which the French had occupied, and it was found that the Castle of Bressac still fired shells furiously from a battery of four guns established in the park, a parliamentarian was dispatched to explain how bootless further resistance was, and to demand a surrender.

The answer was a refusal.

The Duke said to the commanding officer, "Let us not yield, so long as there is a cartridge amongst us, Monsieur," and as the officer almost looked upon the Duke as the true commander of the place, he had conveyed this reply to the enemy.

An hour later the battery in the park had been dismantled, a whole wing of the castle had been blown into fragments, and the foremost barricade in the park no longer existed.

Another half-hour and the second barricade was abandoned.

Then the third had to be relinquished.

Then the fourth.

The soldiers continued to fire bravely and desperately. They could see nothing either before or behind them. The park and grounds were steeped in a fog of smoke, amidst which resounded the groans of wounded men and the bang of shells exploding every moment.

At last the park became thoroughly un-

tenable. The retreat sounded, and the last barricade was deserted.

"We can still defend the castle!" shouted the Duke, who, grimy with powder and blood-stained, had been firing from the barricades side by side with the soldiers.

"To the castle!" cried the commanding officer, obediently echoing, and waving his sword above his head. He was on foot. His horse had been shot under him.

In a very few minutes more the park was filled with Prussians. The artillery duel had now ceased. It could only be a question of defending the castle man to man and hand to hand. The defenders fired out of the windows; the invaders fired back, but also charged forward with bayonets, to try and carry the place by storm.

The carnage was becoming frightful. Eleven assaults were repulsed one after the other. The marble terrace, bordering on the ground-floor windows, was strewn with great mounds of dead, and blood trickled down the white steps as if from an open fountain. Every moment a crash could be heard, as a bullet shivered a wainscot or smashed a mirror into a thousand atoms. There was not a pane of glass unbroken in the whole house. Two or three bullets striking the great crystal chandelier in the state drawing-room together, cut the chains by which it hung as though with a scythe, and the mighty fabric of glass splintered on to the floor like a shower of diamonds, carrying away crumbling masses of plaster from the ceiling with it. But nobody talked of yielding, until at length the cry arose that ammunition was beginning to fail.

"If we could only knock over that officer who is commanding them!" shouted a bare-armed, bare-throated soldier, who had thrown off his coat to fight better, and was streaming with perspiration, "it might discourage them."

M. de Criqueot and Fleur de Lys were near him. Fleur de Lys had been loading for the soldiers, her cousin taking care to stand — without her perceiving it — in such a position that a bullet must strike him before hitting her. The soldier had pointed out of the window in uttering his cry. M. de Criqueot and Fleur de Lys both glanced over his shoulder. The officer he was designating was Friedrich Leoneizen.

The man levelled his rifle. He was a deadly marksman; but just as he was drawing the trigger, the Marquis brushed by him with his elbow. The shot missed.

Fleur de Lys, who had been holding her breath, and was leaning against the wall for support, looked towards her cousin, and their eyes met. The man was reloading a second time. He aimed; but M. de Criquetot was saved the trouble of spoiling the shot a second time, for whilst the finger was on the trigger, the rifle slipped out of the man's hand, and he fell forward himself, with a bullet in the head.

The shout now seemed to rise from everybody at once:—"The officer!—fire at him!"

"He seems bewitched: the bullets won't touch him."

"This is at his head."

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

But the officer advanced, his men following him. Lead whistled around him, above him, but never harmed him.

"If somebody does not bring him down, he and his men will be in the castle in another minute," thundered an officer, discharging three barrels of a revolver in

quick succession.

At this moment, the Duke de Bressac, who had been sitting, to fire the better, sprang up, with his hand to his head, staggered forward, and rolled at his daughter's feet. A revolver escaped from his hands, which Fleur de Lys picked up.

"The officer! at the officer!" the ery was now raging like a hurricane from a hundred parched throats at once.

Pale, but with her lips set, Fleur de Lys stepped forward. Then she aimed with her weapon. Friedrich Leoneizen was scarcely at thirty yards' distance from her. Her face was flushed, but grave and sad. She pressed the trigger.

He reeled in his saddle, looked, saw who had shot him; then fell.

Before her cousin could stop her, or guess her intention, Fleur de Lys had turned the revolver on herself. At the very moment when Leoneizen touched the ground she fell too; but no one except her cousin noticed whence the shot came.

THE preparations made by the Governments of the present age to have every phase of a total eclipse studied and recorded, contrast favourably with the superstition that prevailed a few centuries ago. For instance, the *Scientific American* quotes the following from a German paper:—"The Elector of Darmstadt was informed of the approach of a total eclipse in 1699, and published the following edict in consequence:—"His Highness, having been informed that on Wednesday morning next at ten o'clock a very dangerous eclipse will take place, orders that on the day previous, and a few days afterwards, all cattle be kept housed, and to this end ample fodder to be provided; the doors and windows of the stalls to be carefully secured, the drinking wells to be covered up, the cellars and garrets guarded so that the bad air may not obtain lodgment, and thus produce infection, because such eclipses frequently cause whooping cough, epilepsy, paralysis, fever, and other diseases, against which every precaution should be observed."

knows what will be the amount of his bill when he leaves it, and it is to be regretted that hotel proprietors in England do not hang up in some conspicuous place some such prospectus as the following, which, according to an Indian paper, is to be found at an hotel at Lahore—"Gentlemen who come in hotel not say anything about their meals they will be charged for, and if they should say before-hand that they are going out to breakfast or dinner, &c., are if they say that they not have anything to eat they will not be charged, and if not so, they will be charged, or unless they bring it to the notice of the manager of the place, and should they want to say anything, they must order the manager for and not any one else, and unless they not bring it to the notice of the manager, they will be charged for the least things according to hotel rate, and no fuss will be allowed afterward about it. Should any gentleman take wall lamp or candle light from the public rooms they must pay for it without any dispute its charges. Monthly gentlemen will have to pay my fixed rate made with them at the time, and should they absent day in the month they will not be allowed to deduct anything out of it, because I take from them less rate than my usual rate of monthly charges."

One of the hotel grievances in this country is that no one on entering the establishment

Fall Mall Gazette.

From The Athenæum.  
UMBRELLAS.

TOWARDS the close of his nineteen years of splendid wastefulness in London, when bailiffs incessantly watched the doors of the Gore House and a certain dwelling in a modest terrace a little lower down the road, Alfred, Count D'Orsay, gave utterance to a memorable sentiment. In reply to a prudent friend, who vainly tried to dissuade him from ordering a new carriage that he did not need, and could not pay for, the last of the dandies declared that as long as he lived whatever he used should be the best of its kind. When he could no longer drive the best carriage, he would carry the best umbrella in town. The prudent friend was set aside with a smile; and in another year the beau had retired to his native land, and entered on the last stage of his career. True to his word, when he could not keep a perfect carriage, he made himself the owner of a faultless "gingham"; and he went to his artistic grave at Cham bourey leaning on the daintiest umbrella that could be found in Paris.

The *parapluie* that alternately aided the tottering steps and shaded the wan features of the fading Count was the newest specimen of a contrivance whose story is almost co-extensive with that of human civilization. The last and youngest of a noble line, it had a pedigree of venerable antiquity. Though it may have had no lineal connection with the biblical "shade defending from the sun," it could boast a descent from the symbolical sunshades of Nineveh, Egypt, India, and China. Its remote and gorgeous ancestors, typical of death and dominion over life, had conferred splendour on the religious pomps of extinct peoples, and inspired their beholders with awe. Their effigies may be found on sacred sculptures, in the ruins of palaces and temples. Their mysterious powers are commemorated in the adornments of antique vases, and the traditions of superstitious faiths. In the fifth incarnation of Vishnu, when the god went down into hell, he bore in his hand the same implement that Jonas Hanway, the founder of Magdalen Hospital used to carry about George the Third's London, to the scorn and rage of hackney-coachmen. In like manner an old bas-relief represents Dionysius descending to the infernal regions, holding a specimen of the ingenious contrivance that was extended by a footman over the head of Dr. Shebbeare, to ward off the rain and rotten eggs from the unfortunate man of letters whilst he

stood in the pillory, in 1758, — an indulgence to the seditious writer that brought rebuke and punishment on Under-Sheriff Beardman. From time immemorial the right to bear a single umbrella has been a considerable distinction in Eastern lands. To this day, to be the lord of many umbrellas is to be a sublime personage. The Mahratta Princes, who reigned at Poonah and Sattara, had the title of *Ch'hatra-pati*, i.e., Lord of the Umbrella, from which superb designation it has been suggested that we derive the word "satrap." The King of Ava was proud to call himself "King of the White Elephant, and Lord of the Twenty-four Umbrellas." Barely sixteen years have passed since the King of Birma styled himself, in a letter to the Marquis of Dalhousie, "His great, glorious, and most excellent Majesty, who reigns over the kingdoms of Thunaparanta, Tampadipa, and all the great umbrella-wearing chiefs of Eastern countries." A member of the Pytchley Hunt would not care to turn out at the end of a good regiment of umbrella-bearers; but, as Mr. Woodcroft reminds us in his capital essay on the archaeology of sun-shades, "we hear of twenty-four umbrellas being carried before the Emperor of China when he was going hunting." In London, where a single dealer in furnished and unfurnished sticks has sold four millions of alpaca umbrellas in the course of the last twenty years, and where umbrellas are so lightly esteemed that fairly honest men take no trouble to return them after borrowing them, it seems very absurd that nations should have exalted the portable canopy to be an ensign of authority and a symbol of religious truth. But there is nothing in the nature of things which makes stars, garters, and buttons more appropriate emblems of personal worth than wands fitted with folds of silk.

Though the Greeks used the umbrella as a mystic symbol in some of their sacred festivals, it was known to them chiefly in later times as an article of luxury for the comfort and decoration of aristocratic woman-kind. Aristophanes and Pausanias both mention the *οκρίδατον* as though it were a contrivance commonly used by ladies. Adopting two of the ancient uses of the parasol, the Romans gave it to their gentlewomen as a piece of apparel suitable to their delicacy, and in later times raised the canopy of state to be a symbol of authority. The cardinal's hat is probably derived from the umbrella suspended in the Basilican churches of





weighed about 3 lb. 8 1-2 oz., a weight exceeding by 3 lb. that of the silk umbrellas manufactured in Paris in 1849.

Some notion may be formed of the amount of ingenuity expended during the last eighty or ninety years on improving the umbrella, from the fact that this collection of abridgments of specifications contains abstracts of 292 patents, the earliest of which was granted in October, 1786, and the latest in July, 1861. Some few of these patents are for walking-sticks not furnished with drapery; and many of them refer only to improvements, or proposals for improvement, of one or more of the subordinate parts of the mechanism of the weather-shade, such as ribs, tips, handles, ferules, notches, springs. But the majority of the specifications are of contrivances affecting the umbrella's general design, or principle materials. Some of the schemes are very fanciful; but the entire collection is an entertaining exhibition of human ingenuity acting on a trifling matter of convenience. Whoever wishes for an umbrella so fashioned that its silk may be shut up within the stick, may have his desire by buying Edward Thomason's "rhabdoskidopheros," or one of the several weather-shades made with the same object as Mr. Thomason's invention. The warlike citizen is provided, by the invention of Malcolm McGregor and William McFarland (1808), with an implement that may be used at will to ward off rain or kill a foe; for it may "be shut up in its case, to be used as a walking-stick, and may be used as a defensive weapon by having a spear attached, which is prevented from running into the stick when used by a spring." For the benefit of umbrella-bearers whose blood circulates sluggishly, and whose hands, therefore, are liable to suffer from cold, Mr. Charles Smith (1846) invented an umbrella-handle with sockets to hold heating matters. Ladies who like to have the latest and best information about the time of day may have sun-dials fitted in the handles of their sun-shades by the patented process. Three varieties of pipe-stick, to be used as a walking-staff or umbrella, have been devised for the happiness of smokers. The pedestrian who likes to shoot wild birds, and be armed against a capricious

climate, may have an umbrella fixed on a needle-gun cane. Nervous and morbidly-modest ladies, who do not like to be looked at as they walk about, and delicate persons who would defend themselves against fine mist as well as rain, should buy Mr. Samuel Stocker's umbrella, which has a circular veil or curtain attached to the circumference of the unfolded weather-shade, so that its tented bearer looks something like an animated post-pillar. The falling curtain, it should be observed, is provided with a little window, so that the secluded traveller can see where he is going. But the umbrella-holder, who wishes to put a bow or other window into his portable tenement should have it glazed by Mr. John Henry Johnson's patent "mode or modes of inserting glass or other transparent plates in the fabric of umbrellas." The most perfect umbrella, attainable in the present state of industrial art, would combine the special conveniences of several patents. First of all, the person ambitious of possessing the best possible *parapluie* should provide himself with Henry William Van Kleef's "walking-staff, constructed to contain a pistol, powder, ball, and screw telescope, pen, ink, paper, pencil, knife, and drawing utensils." For the drawing utensils of this apparatus he should substitute a small pipe and half an ounce of tobacco. This staff should be enriched with a warming-pan handle, furnished with a sun-dial, and fitted with a waterproof canopy, having a circular curtain and six handsome windows. The whole should be enclosed in Thomas Dawson's "Improved case or cover for umbrellas, which can also be worn as a garment"; with respect to which envelope, contrived a double debt to pay, the inventor remarks: "I provide it with a button and a loop, or other suitable fastening; and when not worn on the shoulders the umbrella is inserted and rolled in it, the loop and button fastened, and the case assumes a neat and slightly appearance." Though it might not be all that he could desire in respect to weight, the umbrella, thus constituted and furnished, would enable its proprietor to walk to and fro between the city and his suburban residence with an agreeable sense of security.

From The Athenæum.  
THE FORTESCUE PAPERS.\*

It was a lucky thing for society generally that Mr. Upcott, then Librarian at the London Institution, paid a visit to Wotton in 1817, and that he told Lady Evelyn how dearly he loved autographs. "If you mean such things as these," said the lady, showing him a letter by Sarah of Marlborough, "you may be easily gratified, for the house is full of them!" It was exactly what Mr. Upcott did mean, and he naturally referred to the honoured name of old John Evelyn. "Old Mr. Evelyn!" exclaimed the *poco-curante* lady; "why, there is a clothes-basket full of his letters and papers in one of the garrets! I was so tired of seeing them about the house that I told the maids to light the fires with them." Mr. Upcott was soon bending over this dignified clothes-basket, and found in it, nearly intact, that famous Diary, which has given nearly as much delight to the world as the Diary of ten years of the life of Pepys. Even this latter Diary lay for generations, at Oxford, a dead letter. Its shorthand character was as undecipherable as an inscription from Nineveh. But keys to both have been found; and the Rev. J. Smith constructed the one which opened new scenes of the social life of the seventeenth century to a world of readers. Some MSS. go astray altogether, and turn up in the least-expected places. Boswell's letters to Temple, published in 1857, were discovered just as they were about to be used for wrapping up groceries in Madame Noël's shop at Boulogne. There can be little doubt that researches among the papers in many old and noble houses at home would well repay its trouble. The discovery of these Fortescue papers is a case in point. Seven years ago, Mr. Fortescue came into possession of Dropmore, the home of perhaps the noblest trees in the world. The estate, before Lady Grenville enjoyed it, had belonged to her ancestor, Governor Pitt, of Boconnoc. The originals of the papers now published by the Camden Society were found by Mr. Fortescue in an old box in the carpenter's shed. The contents, wholly or in part, had probably been considered as waste paper. There was an endorsement, in a handwriting of the last century,

on one of the letters, to this effect, "Marq. of Bucks on State affairs . . . useless."

Mr. Gardiner has done wisely in editing only a selection from these papers. They have little of the general interest which pervades Pepys, Evelyn, or even Boswell, and the editor might have eliminated more largely. The story of ship-building according to the invention of Robert Dudley is, for instance, fully told in Adlard's "Amye Robsart and Leicester"; and Dudley's own story is as fully told in the *Athenæum* (No. 2231). Nevertheless there is much in this volume which the student of history will be glad to read and much which will amuse those who open it merely for traits of social manners. The editor has given 161 letters, from 1607, a letter from James the First to Henri Quatre, to 1644, a note from Charles the First to Prince Rupert. One of the most remarkable letters is addressed by James to the Commissioners for the examination of Sir Walter Raleigh. Thus writes the King in October, 1618:—

"We have perused your letter touching the proceeding with Sir Walter Raleigh, in both which courses propounded by you we find imperfection. As first we like not that there should be only a narrative sett forth in print of his crimes together with our warrant for his execution. And for the other course of a publik calling him before our Counsell wee think it not fitt, because it would make him too popular, as was found by experience at his arraignment at Winchester, where by his witt he turned the hatred of men into compassion of him. Secondly, it were too great honor to him to have that course taken against one of his sort, which we have observed never to have been used but toward persons of great qualitie."

James suggests a more private way of trying and condemning Raleigh, and adds:—

"And then, after the sentence for his execution which hath been thus longe suspended, a declaration be presently putt forth in print, a warrant being sent down for us to signe for his execution. Wherein we hold the French Physitian's confession very materiall to be inserted, as also his own and his consortes confession that, before they were at the Islesdes, he told them his ayme was at the fleet, with his son's oration, when they came to the town, and some touch of his hateful speeches of our person."

James as clearly murdered Raleigh to gratify Spain, as Henry the Seventh murdered the princely boy the Earl of Warwick in order to win from Spain the hand of Catherine of Arragon for Arthur, his

\* *The Fortescue Papers*; consisting chiefly of Letters relating to State Affairs, collected by John Packer, Secretary to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Edited, from the Original MSS. in the Possession of the Hon. G. M. Fortescue, by Samuel Rawson Gardiner. (Printed for the Camden Society.)

son. After Raleigh's execution, Cottington wrote from Madrid to Sir Thomas Lake :—

"His Majesties proceeding with Sir Walter Raleigh hath given here so much satisfaction and contentment as I am not able to express it unto your honour, but all men doe much extolle his Majesties syncerity in it."

Among clerical letters of interest, there is one from Theophilus Field Bishop of Landaff (1619). Mr. Gardiner does not note that the bishop was brother to Nathaniel Field, the Shakspearean actor. The letter addressed to Buckingham has this passage in it :—

"Right Honorable. My ever acknowledged and (next to God and the King) most adored best patron. I have presumed to write to the King my master in the behalfe, of my poore lamentably ruined church of Landaffe, whose revenues (being the very sinewes of any sea) are shrank from a thousand pounds a yeare to seven score pounds. No part of that which is lost can be recovered without a commission, and that which is left is in danger of loosing without a new charter."

Humiliation and complaint went together. Dr. Donne himself, looking for the Deanery of Salisbury (1621), vacant by Dean Bowles succeeding to Lord-Keeper Williams, at Westminster, who was about to take the see of Lincoln, could thus stoop to the mendicant strain in writing to Buckingham :—

"Ever since I had your Lordship's letter, I have esteemed myself in possession of Salisbury, and more than Salisbury, of a place in your service; for I tooke Salisbury as a seale of ytt. I hear that my Lord Keeper finds reason to continue in Westminster, and I know that neyther your Lordship nor he knows how narrow and penurious a fortune I wrestle with in thys world. But I am so far from dependinge upon the assistance of any but your Lordship, as that I do not assist myself so far as with a wishe that my Lord Keeper would have left a hole for so poore a worme, as I am to have crept in at. All that I meane in usinge thys boldnes, of puttinge myself into your Lordship's presence by thys ragge of paper, ys to tell your Lordship that I ly in a corner, as a clodd of clay, attendinge what kinde of vessell yt shall please you to make of your Lordship's humblest and thankfullest and devotedest servant,  
J. DONNE."

When Williams got to Lincoln he was as discontented as any of his class. He writes to Packer, Buckingham's secretary :—

"The Bushoppicke (the narrower I looke unto it) the more lamentable it proves : Howses,

some demolished, others ruinous, the woods close shaven, and all like a Sea wherein I shall comin the fiftie Bishopp in one fiftene yeares. But I love the last Bishopp soe well that I saye not more of the Bushoppicke. My Keeper's place is a great deale more closely pould and very much dismembered; and yet am I soe much envied by most, as I knowe not where to complayne but in my Lord's bosom onelye."

Bacon appears in these pages, urging his elevation to the peerage. Buckingham replies that peerages were once to be had more easily than at that present time "when to my knowledg his Majesty cannot endure to heare of making any for his own benefitt, notwithstanding the great necessities wherein he is." The most amusing comment on this text is in the following petition, sent to Buckingham soon after he wrote to Bacon :—

"Your Lordship procured for Sir Thomas Gerrard and others the Corporation for the Tobacco pipe makers, upon which there is 4,000 li layde out and loste. His Majestie hath recalled the grant, and therefore in equity ought in grace to geve recompence. Wee present to his Majestie one without exception to be made a Barron whoe will geve 10,000 li. Humbly craving out of this, such a somme as his Majestie shalbe pleased to grant in lieu of the 4,000 li loste, besides the long services of the Sutors and the overthrowe of Sir Thos. Gerrard's estate, being bound for his father for 7,000 li, which if his Majestie vouchsafe not to releve, his lands wilbe all ceased upon and utterly lost, to the undoing of him, his wife, children, and famly."

For other illustrations of historical characters and incidents, we refer our readers to Mr. Gardiner's volume. We may add, for sentimental students, that some amusing love-passages enliven the volume. They are too long to be dealt with, and too diffuse to bear condensation, but we recommend them to all interested in matter of that tender nature.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

#### THE COMMUNISTS IN LONDON.

A CORRESPONDENT, who signs himself "An English Officer under the Commune," sends us the following account of the Communal Association in London. It was written last week :—

Free-thinkers though they be for the most part, the Communists in London devote the Sunday to a work of charity such as few believers indulge in on the day of rest. At five

o'clock, a public-house in Soho opens its doors to them, and on the first floor a large room is reserved to the use of the Red Benevolent Society. As an ex-officer of the Commune — though, being an Englishman, I can hardly call myself a refugee — I am admitted to these weekly gatherings, and have often been struck by the "thorough" manner in which they put into small practice their large theories on self-government. Their purpose is earnest and humane — it is simply one of mutual assistance. Every effort is made to collect money or offers of work, and these are distributed among the assembly according to the requirements of each member. To be a member it is necessary to fill up a *bulletin d'identité*, whereon is stated the name, profession, Paris and London addresses of the applicant, his employment under the Commune, and the nature of his services to the cause. Besides which, references as to his political conviction are required, and a statement whether or no he needs material aid. The chief promoter of these precautionary measures was a member of a similar society in Brussels numbering eleven persons, among which, it was subsequently discovered, five were police agents in disguise. The constitution of the society is ideally democratic. A committee of nine is elected by means of the *scrutin de liste* and absolute majority. At the end of every month lots are drawn, and the three members they designate are obliged to withdraw. An election refills these posts, and thus an infusion of new blood is constantly secured and the society is guaranteed from the government of a clique.

The séance of last Sunday was peculiarly characteristic of the operation of this constitution. Nearly eighty persons were present, the number of refugees having swollen enormously during the last two weeks. The President having called for order by means of a beer pot, the Citizen T., the preserver of the Paris Post Office, was requested to present the budget. I remarked that the assessors persisted in estimating the amount by shillings instead of pounds, which proceeding certainly gave apparent importance to the meagre sum (£7 8s.) of the receipt; the bulk of the money provided by the International Association, the rest by individual partisans. The whole was miserably insufficient. A formidable deficit had to be made up, and sixty members clamoured for assistance. Only 2s. could be allotted to each. This, with a few more shillings to be distributed on Thursday, constituted for many the whole week's subsistence. After the discussion of the budget, J. B. C., ex-member of the Commune and a species of Minister of Public Works to the Association, announced that the committee had received applications from a company for four navvies to be employed on a railway near London. It was

painful to note the eagerness with which several of those present, evidently belonging to what is called the better classes, pressed forward and tendered their services. Such sudden falls in the social scale are not rare among the Communistists. A French friend whom I knew in Paris as the influential agent of a large Lyons manufactory is at present contentedly stitching seldery; and another, a physician, distributes bread for a charitable institution at one pound a week. This matter over, the Citizen Clement went on to inform us that last Sunday two English policemen had forced their way into the room, looked round and departed, not, however, without having counselled the proprietor of the house to allow no more "communist meetings." After this illegal interference the committee wrote to Colonel Henderson, informing him of the nature of their meetings, and asking if they were contrary to English law. This missive is yet unanswered. I myself am at a loss to account for the irruption of police, but I know that such wanton attempts to take advantage of a foreigner's ignorance of the law produces a disastrous effect on the minds of those who at least admire our so-called political freedom.

More important questions having been laid at rest, the Assembly proceeded to give some time to discussions of a *fantaisiste* character. The puritan among puritans, Citizen L., Dictator of Marseilles, rose to demand whether the committee had made inquiries into the truth of certain rumours current in Communist society, which alleged that a Frenchman and a Republican had struck a woman! Here a little inordinately moustached man broke in, saying that the "orator" had no right to make public "secrets of the Alcove," which phrase testified to the interrupter's intimate acquaintance with the late Paul de Kock. In answer to this, L. delivered a speech equal to the best I have heard fall from his lips. He maintained that Republicans could have no secrets. "Alcoves" were relegated to feudal castles and had no place under the roof that covers a free man's head. Englishmen must know the real character of of the partisans of the Commune by the example we set now that we are in their midst. They must learn to appreciate that beside the *petits crevés* of the Empire and the pampered landowners of the Versailles Right, the working men who governed Paris are as an Iretton to a Buckingham. If the rumour in question was well founded, the man capable of so vile an act was no Republican, and could have nothing in common with the brave men gathered round the speaker. This was vehemently applauded, and after the election of three new members for the committee — in which I noticed three women took part — the meeting dissolved.



